

Chapter 1 Happy Birthday

As the night rain poured down on number four privet drive Harry Potter lay clear awake in his bed. It was the second week of the summer holyday and he was utterly sick of it. He had stayed in his room almost all the time since he got back from Hogwarts. The weather had been too bad for him to take his usual walks around little winking and the only times he had gotten out was when he ran down to Mrs Figg's for tea. It was horrible to be shut up like this.

His mind often wandered to the veil Sirius had disappeared behind and he sometimes just lay in his bed crying for hours on end. Luckily the most horrible surprise of the last school year, the prophecy, was something Harry's mind seemed to considered as too awful and unreal to bring up in his head.

He had during the first days of the summer holyday before his mind had started to stop the prophecy drifting through his head figured that he was a dead boy. No matter how hard he tried, he would never be remotely as powerful as Voldemort was; he wasn't even an animagus like his father. He was fairly good at Quidditch, and above average in defence against the dark arts but that was all. Voldemort would probably have killed him already if he had known more about the prophecy but Harry didn't complain. He sometimes had a strong urge to find out whether Luna Lovegood was right about meeting your love ones afterwards.

He had several times brought out his fire bolt and been on the verge of just flying away to London to get some gold and then just fly away forever, Voldemort had probably never been too far south judging by his skin colour and would probably not look for him on every tropical island. Then he had always thought of Ron and Hermione and sometimes even Ginny and Remus, they would all miss him as badly as he would they.

Harry sighed he lay thinking of Sirius as usual before he went to sleep he, missed Sirius terribly much. Harry started to cry and then he just couldn't stop him self he started to sob loudly. He had always managed to keep his tears silent but now he felt so much sorrier then ever before. He pressed his pillow tight over his face to dampen his

sobs. Harry couldn't find a good reason to why he was sobbing like this but he supposed that it had something to do with accepting the fact that Sirius was gone forever.

He fell asleep many hours later still sobbing. His emotions didn't stop tormenting just because he happened to be asleep however. He had the saddest dream of his life, a cute little silver blond haired girl with blue eyes faded in and out of darkness and finally she just vanished, he recognized her vaguely as if she had appeared in his dreams before. He had suffered many dreams more horrible before, but none as sad; he couldn't really understand what was so sad about it, just that he had been crying badly all through the dream.

Next morning Harry awoke by a knock on his door. He awoke very abruptly because his aunt hadn't dared to wake him since Mad Eye Moody had told them to be nice towards Harry when they met at King's Cross. There was another knock; it was a very soft knock very unlike his aunt's sharp raps. This confused Harry, and he decided to open the door so he slipped out of his bed took the few steps needed to reach the door and opened it. No one was there maybe it was a sound he had heard from the kitchen.

"Harry it's me Tonks," He heard a whispering female voice say.

On instinct Harry whispered back, "Hurry! Get inside before the Dursleys get you!"

He heard the floor squeak and saw his chair fall over.

"Sorry!" She said as he closed the door behind her.

Harry who had had a few moments to think grabbed his wand tightly behind his back. He hadn't seen her yet, for all he knew she could be anybody from Voldemort to Dobby. Harry turned half away from her and then in mid motion leapt to where he thought she was. He felt an invisibility cloak under his fingers and pulled. Soon he saw Tonks surprised face he pointed his wand at her.

"How do I know who you are?" He asked her as calmly as he could.

Before she could say anything he added, "Do the pig snout."

She closed her eyes and concentrated and after a short moment, her nose had transformed.

"Sorry, Moody must be rubbing off on me," Harry muttered putting his wand down.

"Don't worry about it," Tonks said as she looked down his pyjamas.

"Woke you up?" She added with a teasing smile.

"Yeah, but don't worry about it," Harry said blushing slightly. He didn't really like to be seen in Dudley's old pyjamas.

"So, what are you doing here?" He asked hoping to take the attention away from his pyjamas.

"I got the day shifts until you leave... No more paperwork!" She added happily.

"And you can talk with me?" Harry asked.

"No, I don't think so but that wouldn't be any fun, so I didn't ask," She said with a grin.

"That's great I'm practically dying here," Harry replied.

"I would too. We got to get you a better pyjama"

Harry blushed.

"Hurry up and get dressed," She added and turned her back to coddled with Hedwig.

Harry got dressed and told her that she could face him again.

"You got to be kidding? Who buys your clothes?" She said looking at Dudley's old clothes.

"They weren't bought for me," Harry said a bit irritated.

"I can see that," She said calmly and then smiled, "the-great-boy-who-lived-and-don't-get-decent-clothes."

Harry didn't find this very funny so he simply said, "I like to see you get better clothes out of the Dursleys."

There was a moment of silence as Harry gave Hedwig some owl treats for breakfast.

"Common let's go over to Mrs Figg for breakfast," She said and slipped back under her invisibility cloak.

Harry opened his bedroom door for her and closed it after her. His aunt and uncle had breakfast outside in the garden the door was open they both sneaked out. Harry avoided them and they avoided him, in fact, they had hardly said anything to him all summer. Harry and Tonks walked down privet drive towards Mrs Figg's house in silence.

For what seemed for the first time this summer, the sun was shining. They arrived a few moments later. When Mrs Figg's front door was closed behind them, Tonks stated that she wasn't supposed to be seen by anyone and that she had to wear the invisibility cloak all the time.

"So, how are things going?" Harry asked the invisible Tonks.

"Can't give you any details Harry." She said apologetically.

"Loads of attacks, as you probably read in the Prophet." Mrs Figg said sipping a cup of tea.

"Yeah, anything happened today?"

"Some French family was killed, innocent bystanders. Delacour I think it was," said Tonks from her what appeared to be empty stool.

"The Delacours?" Harry whispered feeling very sick.

"Yeah, horrible," Tonks said sadly. Harry wished he hadn't had any breakfast now.

"Gabrielle too?" He choked out after what seemed to Harry a long moment.

“You knew ‘em?” Mrs Figg asked in a concerned voice.

“Yeah, are you sure?” Harry whispered.

“Yes I’m sorry Harry, Mr and Mrs Delacour and their little daughter,” Tonks said in a truly sorry voice.

“Fleur’s all right then?” Harry asked in a high-pitched voice.

“I think so, there wasn’t a Fleur mentioned in the article anyway,” Tonks replied and hugged Harry comfortingly.

“How do you know them?” Tonks asked him.

“Fleur was Beauxbaton’s Tri wizard champion; I thought I saved Gabrielle...” He couldn’t continue instead he got up and walked away he knew Tonks followed him but she didn’t say anything. He walked around all day in Little Whinging, not able too sit still.

Next morning when he woke up, he felt a little bit better and he wondered where Tonks was. It was raining outside and he didn’t want her to be forced to stand outside his house so he dressed and walked out in the rain.

“Tonks?” He whispered as loud as he dared.

“I’m here,” he heard her voice reply from somewhere out on the street.

“You should have woken me up. Are you wet?”

“Of course not, I’m a witch. Slightly bored though,” She replied.

“Let’s go over to Mrs Figg’s and have some breakfast,” Said Harry.

“So, you got your OWLs back yet?” Tonks asked him.

“No, not yet, I usually get my letter around my birthday. I hope I get good enough grades to become an auror,” He said.

“Oh, you want to become an auror?” Tonks asked.

“Yeah, at least that’s what I’m aiming for”

"That would be great I could be your mentor," Tonks said. She was rather childish sometimes Harry thought, not stupid just very frank and optimistic he liked that about her.

The weeks passed much faster then it ever had done before on privet drive in the company of Tonks. She brought him clothes she had bought with money from his vault. They were all colourful to say the very least and not really Harry's style but Tonks loved them, and they were much better then Dudley's old cloths. Before Harry knew it, he woke up on his 16th birthday.

Somehow, Tonks had sneaked into his room cast a silencing charm on his room. She sung at the top of her voice, "Happy Birth Day". The feeling of someone singing 'Happy Birth day to you' was a completely new feeling to him. He loved this feeling, he never knew what he'd missed all these years and before he could stop himself he felt a tear roll down his cheek. He hated himself for it.

"Harry, are you crying?" Tonks asked him.

"I don't think anyone has ever done this to me since I was very little," He answered feeling very stupid, he wiped the tear from his cheek and smile widely.

"Thanks," He muttered.

"You mean the Dursley's never sang to you?" She asked in disbelief.

"No," He replied shortly he didn't like the subject of his childhood.

"Not even before Hogwarts?" She asked him again.

"No, so do I get any gifts?" He asked her trying to change the subjects.

"Oh, Yes!" Tonks exclaimed proudly, "Open mine first," she added eagerly.

"Makeup?" He asked he didn't expect this.

"Yes, magical concealment cream. It'll magic away your scar..."

“Help me try it out,” He interrupted her running up to his mirror.

“All right,” She stood up and walked over to him, “But I warn you, I never bothered with make up.”

“Don’t be stupid you’re a girl it’s in your blood,” He replied opening the package and smudged some on to his forehead and tried to even it out.

Tonks sighed as she saw his poor attempts to conceal his scar.

“Let me,” She said and almost at once she managed to conceal his scar though also accidentally pointed him is his left eye slightly.

“Do you think it’ll work, I mean will people recognize me?”

“Oh, depends,” She said and looked very uncomfortable. “Open Ginny’s present,” she said handing him a small rectangular package.

“Okay,” He replied and opened the small rectangular package.

It was a comb one side was bright and one side was multicoloured. On the bright side it stood ‘Silver Blond’ and on the multicoloured side it stood ‘Normal’.

“A comb?” He asked her, “Did you to go shop together?”

“What if we did?” Tonks asked him grinning widely. She grabbed the comb and started to pull it through his hair. The hair that passed through the comb became blond the very opposite of Harry’s hair colour. Harry’s jaw dropped.

“No one who doesn’t know you will recognize you now,” She stated. It was true the boy that looked back at him from the mirror didn’t look like him all that much though on a closer look his green eyes gave him away.

“Almost as polyjuice potion,” He said with a wide grin and added without thinking, “but this doesn’t taste bad.”

“You used polyjuice potion?” She asked but then she added quickly, “No don’t answer that I’m on duty strictly speaking.”

“If you say so,” He replied and decided to pull the conversation back from polyjuice potion.

“Can’t wait to visit Diagon Alley, no one will notice me.”

“Open your other gifts, save the big one for later it’s nothing funny.” She said when he started to move towards the biggest package.

“All right you choose.”

“Open this one it’s from Hagrid” ,She said and handed him a little package. It was full of fudge.

“Want one?” He asked her with a wicked smile.

“Oh no, you won’t fool me! That fudge would glue the mouth shut on a dragon for a year.”

They laughed for a short moment but then they both felt rather guilty. Hagrid meant well he always did. He got a similar package from Mrs Weasley but this time Tonks gladly accepted some toffee it was very good as usual.

He got a Quill from Ron that wouldn’t allow you to misspell words even if you tried and a huge black book that looked very expensive from Hermione called ‘Duelling for Masters’. He opened it and saw an inscription. ‘To Harry with thanks from Dumbledore’s Army’ it said followed by a list of every Dumbledore’s Army member. He smiled proudly.

“Dumbledore’s Army?” Tonks asked curiously.

“Didn’t Dumbledore tell you why he left Hogwarts?” He asked her.

“No, he was so busy I don’t think anyone dared asked him”

Harry told her about Dumbledore’s Army. He avoided the fact that he’d been the teacher, but to no good.

"So all the students that joined Dumbledore's Army got 'Dueling for Masters'," Tonks asked him unbelievably.

"Well no, I kind of was the teacher," Harry answered, he hated this kind of attention.

"I see, Professor Potter," She said mockingly.

"Oh shut up," He said with a grin.

"You still got two packages left," Tonks reminded him.

He opened the smaller one of them from Fred and George, he opened it carefully he knew perfectly well that it could blow up any second but it didn't instead he found a glittering box with the text 'Skiving Snackbox' written over it.

"Skiving Snackbox?" Tonks asked him.

"Yeah, the Twins invented excuses to skive of from class," He replied and showed her a 'puking pastille'.

"Why oh why didn't they invent them when I was in school," She groaned and Harry laughed.

"Only the big 'nothing funny' package left," He said and started to tear it open. It was a mirror but to his surprise, it didn't show him it didn't even show the blond scar less him. In fact, it reflected nothing at all. Inside he could see distant black figures moving.

"A Foe Glass," He said in surprise.

"Yeah I hate those things, can't they invent a Friend Glass instead?" She asked. Harry understood what she meant he knew he had mortal enemies but he didn't really like to be reminded of them.

"Yeah, I see what you mean. Still it's very useful," He said in a rather gloomy voice. He was a little surprised by the number of shadows; if you looked closely, you could see about a hundred of them.

"Yeah it is," She agreed, "I got one too, most aurors have."

Then she smiled widely, "Speaking of which do you dare open your Hogwarts letter?"

"You got it," Harry asked her and his stomach gave a horrible jolt.

"Yeah, here you go," She said and handed him an envelope with the Hogwarts crest on.

"This is it," Harry said.

"Yeah, but don't worry Harry, I mean it's only school."

"Only school," He echoed silently.

He took a deep breath, tore it open and pulled out the letter.

"Gryffindor bravery," He muttered to him self, Tonks must have heard him because she snorted.

Dear Mr Potter

We pleased to inform you of your OWL results.

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---------|---------|-----------|-----|
| Ancient | | | Runes | - |
| Arithmancy | | | | - |
| Astronomy | | | | P |
| Care | of | Magical | Creatures | E |
| Charms | | | | E |
| Defence | Against | the | Dark Arts | O |
| Divination | | | | P |
| Herbology | | | | A |
| History | of | | Magic | P |
| Muggle | Studies | Muggle | Raised | (O) |
| Potions | | | | O |
| Transfiguration | E | | | |

You have received seven OWLs. We recommend that you continue to take the following subjects

| | | | |
|--------|----|---------|-----------|
| Care | of | Magical | Creatures |
| Charms | | | |

Defence Against the Dark Arts
Potions
Transfiguration

Minerva McGonagall

Deputy Headmistress

PS Congratulations! You have a good chance becoming an Auror.

He laughed out loud in relief; he'd gotten outstanding in Potions apparently Snape was a better teacher than Harry gave him credit for, or maybe it's because he and Ron had studied potions very hard at the end of last year. He smiled widely, he had a fair chance of becoming an auror hopefully Ron had too. Hermione had no doubt received several Os and could no doubt become whatever she wanted except maybe a seer.

"I did it, this is my best birthday ever," He said happily, Tonks hugged and congratulated him.

"I have to write Ron and Hermione," Harry said and wrote down some quick words.

Hermione and Ron

I got 7 owls not much perhaps, Hermione. I got Os in Potions and DADA Es in Transfiguration, Charms and Care of magical creatures and an A in Herbology. Thanks for the gifts. Hope to see you soon, write back.

Harry

He sent the letter off with Hedwig.

The day continued in a very happy manner, he had cake at Mrs Figg's. He had never before blown out candles on his birthday cake but it made him feel normal. He was very happy he'd gotten a birthday party even if it was just the three of them it was still a birthday party.

That night he went to bed with a wide smile. He glanced over at his Foe Glass, to his relief he didn't see anything more than distant dark shapes. He didn't like the idea of having the shadows of his mortal enemies in his room next to his bed, but on the other hand he knew for sure that he wasn't in any danger of being murdered any time soon. With that comforting thought, he fell into a restful sleep.

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If you feel like reviewing and want a reply, please leave your email. If you are signed in and show your email in your profile that will do.

Chapter 2 Lying Liquorice

The following morning he awoke in his usual way, by his alarm clock. After a moment, he saw that there was an owl with the daily prophet tied to its leg waiting for him to wake up. He wondered for a moment why someone had sent him the daily prophet. He untied the paper from the owl's leg and it took off without payment. He wondered for another moment if this could be a trap of some kind but then he found a short note explaining that he was mentioned in the paper and therefore received this issue of the daily prophet free. The daily prophet had never sent him their paper before just because they had written about him after a moment he figured that they thought he was mad before and now that his name was cleared, they decided to send him the paper. He received a small shock when he saw Umbridge's face on the front of the paper.

Dolores Umbridge Sentenced to 3 years in Azkaban

Dolores Umbridge Ex Professor and Hogwarts High Inquisitor was yesterday sentenced to three years in Azkaban for the attempt of murder of Harry Potter. Last summer she ordered two dementors to kiss him, luckily the-boy-who-lived knows perfectly well how to deal with dark creatures such as dementors and managed to conjure a corporeal Patronus.

The article went on in very much the same way praising Harry Potter and condemning Umbridge. Harry smiled grimly and thought it a pity that there were no dementors in Azkaban anymore.

Hedwig hooted softly from her open cage she had a letter tied to one of her legs.

"Got me a letter? Good girl" He said and handed her an owl treat. Harry Potter was written across the envelope in Hermione's neat handwriting. He tore it open.

Congratulations Harry!

*Ron got 7 owls too. Os in Potions and defence against the dark arts
Es in transfiguration and charms As in Care of magical creatures,
Astronomy and History of magic!*

I got 11 Os! Can you believe it Harry eleven Os I'm so proud. It is some kind of school record! Ron is starting to get annoyed with me but I can't help it I'm so Happy. Hope to see you soon.

Take care, Love from

Hermione

He smiled widely, this was a dream come true for Hermione even more so then becoming a prefect. After all one girl in every house becomes a prefect every year but setting school records in a thousand year old school doesn't happen every year.

He heard a little tap on the window, not the tap made by an owl but a small stone. Tonks had taken the habit of throwing a small stone at his window every morning to tell him that she was on duty. He got dressed in the most discreet clothes Tonks bought him and got out.

"Why shouldn't I put my wand in my back pocket?" He asked her or at least the spot where he thought she stood. They had taken up on the habit of greeting each other in a way that made sure that they really where who they were supposed to be.

"Cause Mad Eye will se it and tell you of for it" She replied from nowhere.

"Hurry up I'm hungry" she told him and they were of for Mrs Figg's. She greeted them as usual and when they said good-bye. She said "Take care" which struck Harry as odd, more odd then usual anyway.

"What's up with her?" Harry asked Tonks as they walked away from Mrs Figg's house.

"Nothing, listen Harry. We have to go over too your place" She replied.

"Why?"

"Nothing, you'll know later" Tonks said in what was supposed to be a very firm voice. Harry found this rather funny since Tonks completely lacked the ability to be firm and serious.

"Yes, ma'am" He said with a grin.

"Stop grinning I can be very authoriatic if I want to" She said as serious as she could.

Harry burst out laughing.

"Stop laughing Harry or I'll hex you" She said irritably she kept her voice low so that she wouldn't be over heard.

"Sorry, but is 'authoriatic' really a word?" He said trying to fight down his laughter. He didn't have to fight it down for long, they had walked back to number 4 privet drive and on the lawn he could see his aunt and uncle staring at him.

"Who are you talking to boy?" His uncle said in a high-pitched voice.

"Get inside!" His aunt said quickly.

She didn't have to tell him because his uncle grabbed hold of his clothes and bulled him inside. His aunt closed as the door and shut the open kitchen window. Harry could feel Tonks put her hand on his shoulder, to show that she was there.

"Who were you talking to?" His uncle said through gritted teeth. He hated people that muttered to themselves and he hated people who talked to them selves even more, and those few who expected answers back should be put away for good.

He heard Tonks voice in his ear "It's okay you can tell them"

"Nymphadora Tonks" He said trying very hard to keep his face emotionless.

"Nymphadora Tonks" His uncle repeated in disbelief. Tonks kicked him in the shins, which caused him to hiss in pain Harry knew Tonks hated being called by her first name.

"Call the hospital now Petunia" He said he added "Barking mad" as though to provoke Harry.

"I'm not, Tonks is real" He said desperately as his aunt started to dial the number.

"Tell them he's raving and violent" He heard his uncle say to his aunt as she waited for the hospital to answer.

"I'm not violent" he said in a rather loud voice.

"Of course not" His uncle agreed to provoke Harry even further. He looked happier then Harry had ever seen him.

"Tell them to hurry up, Petunia" Vernon said "He might start destroying the house" Why did every one always think he was mad he thought bitterly. He decided to pull Tonks invisibility cloak of her but he didn't have to, she had already done it. He saw his uncle's face change colours so fast that it had to be magic. From Normal to red then to green and then back to red and then purple.

"WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN MY HOUSE?" Uncle Vernon yelled at Tonks. Before Tonks could make a sound, he continued.

"GET OUT! GET OUT! BOTH OF YOU!" He yelled spit flying from his mouth. Tonks look rather pale but managed to reply.

"Calm down sir"

"CALM DOWN SIR? GET OUT NOW!" Uncle Vernon bellowed at her.

"Obliviate" Tonks cried two times first pointing her wand at his uncle and then at his aunt. They both looked lost in their thoughts but were brought back to reality by Tonks.

"As I was saying, we'll just go up and pack and then we'll be off. I don't think you'll see Harry until next summer"

"Right" His uncle mumbled.

Tonks pulled Harry up the stairs to his room.

"We're leaving?" He asked her when she had closed the door.

"Yes, if you want to." She said starting to pack his belongings.

“Of course, I want to how...” He got interrupted by Tonks.

“Is this everything?” She asked him.

“Yeah, it’s everything” He said after a short check.

“Hedwig you’ll have to fly to Ron and Hermione” Tonks said and opened the window with a quick “Alohomora”.

“Right, lets go” She said as she handed him an empty flower pot. When they both grabbed it, she tapped it with her wand. To Harry surprise he felt a familiar feeling of travelling by portkey and before he knew it he stood in the middle of diagon alley. He stumbled slightly but managed to keep standing, Tonks wasn’t so lucky she stumbled over her own leg and fell down on the street; Harry smiled slightly and helped her up. Diagon alley was as full of people as ever even though it was raining. Wizards and Witches were running around shopping as usual though they all seem rather stressed and there didn’t seem to be as much children as usual.

“People are scared” Tonks explained and pointed to several black robed wizards and witches. “Law enforcement and hit wizards all over the place most of us work at least 14 hours a day”

“Shouldn’t people feel safe with all security?” Harry asked her.

“No, use your brain Harry. When they see the security everyone realises that there could be an attack any moment, otherwise they wouldn’t need all these hit wizards and guards”

“We still got some time” Tonks said as she looked down on her watch
“What do you want to do?”

“Let’s hurry over to the Twins shop before we get soaked” Harry replied. He hadn’t been there before but he’d gotten instructions so he found the way without too much trouble. Especially since they had a huge sign that said ‘Weasley’s Wizard Wheezes’ which was enchanted so that it looked as if the sign itself tried to rip itself off its hangings while the pole it was hanging on laughed at its feeble attempts. It was very hard to miss it. They hurried inside and to Harry’s great relief they weren’t attacked by anything or turned into

some animal. At first glance, their shop gave a very serious impression.

“Harry! Tonks! Hurry George” Fred yelled from behind the counter.

“Well if it isn’t the boy-who-lived-and-won-the-tri-wizard-tournament-and-gave...” Fred started.

“Nice to see you” Harry interrupted. He didn’t want anyone more to know that he gave them a thousand galleons.

“Don’t worry Harry; mum is okay with us having a joke shop. When she saw the place we were suddenly respectable business men” George said.

“So everyone knows” Harry asked them.

“How much money” Tonks asked curiously.

“A thousand galleons” Fred and George chorused.

“But don’t worry about it Harry.” Fred said

“No your mum’s hero, believing in her sons when she wouldn’t” George continued.

“Where did you get a thousand galleons? That’s about how much money I make in a year” Tonks asked.

“Tri wizard winnings” Harry mumbled.

“So Harry tried our snack box yet?” Fred asked with a wicked grin.

“No, haven’t had a chance.” Harry replied.

“Well maybe then we can interest you in our latest addition to the ‘Weasley’s Wizard Wheezes’, ‘Lying Liquorice’” George said proudly and handed Harry a black box in the size of a matchbox.

‘Causes the eater to tell lies, no matter what!’ the text on the box said on one side, on the other it said ‘Lying Liquorice’

"If you're tricky you can use it as Veritaserum" Fred whispered in his ear.

"Yeah but don't tell anyone or Fudge will have it banned" George continued.

"Thanks" Harry whispered "How much?"

"Don't be daft Harry you're a partner" Fred said

"You don't expect us to just take a thousand galleons and return nothing?" George said

"Well it was a gift" Harry muttered.

"A gift? You don't give away a thousand galleons to somebody as a gift" Fred said a bit irritated.

"You're a partner whether you like it or not Harry. Besides can you imagine the publicity" George said with a huge smile.

"Thanks" Harry said awkwardly "But don't expect me to take any responsibility I may turn out all responsible like you too"

"Us responsible!" George said in mock outrage.

"We'll get you for that dear partner" Fred added.

"It'll have to be later" Tonks said "We'll have to go now"

"Sheer luck Harry" George said grimly but with a smile.

"We'll I tend to get lucky in pressing situations" Harry replied.

"See you later Harry" Fred said.

"Yeah bye!" Harry replied as he and Tonks went outside.

"So where are we going?" Harry asked Tonks, he knew he wouldn't get an answer, but he asked anyway.

"You'll see" She said and stirred him up Diagon alley to Fortescue's.

“Let’s get inside” Tonks said and opened the door for Harry he was still carrying his trunk although Tonks had made it feather light so it wasn’t much of a burden. It was very warm inside probably to sell more ice-cream he thought. Tonks made their way towards a table in the back and sat down. Harry waited patiently for some kind of answer for why they were in Fortescue's but Tonks would obviously not tell him anything.

“Want Ice-cream?” Harry asked.

“No, lets wait for a moment” Tonks said and Harry didn’t even bother to ask why.

A few moments later he saw a tall beautiful silver blond woman enter closely followed by a young man with long red hair. It was Bill Weasley and Fleur Delacour. He looked over at Tonks and saw that she wasn’t at all surprised to see them instead she beamed at them and waved them over. Fleur did not look up from the floor she was wearing a long black dress. Bill led her over to them and pulled out a chair for her on.

Harry nodded a hello to Bill.

“Hello Fleur” Harry said softly, he didn’t think he could imagine what she was going through but then he realized that he too must have gone through something similar at the age of one and a mild version of it when Sirius had died. Harry cursed Voldemort and all his death eaters silently for doing this to her, nobody deserved this.

“Oh, ‘ello ‘arry” Fleur said forcing a smile.

“Yes, you already know Harry, this is Nymphadora...”

“Don’t call me that, it’s Tonks” Tonks said crossly to Bill. “Nice to meet you Fleur”.

“Hi” Fleur replied weakly.

There was an uncomfortable silence.

“So, anyone wants Ice cream... on me, it's not every day you become a joke shop partner” Harry added in a desperate hope to raise the mood.

“You talked to the twins then?” Bill asked.

“Yeah we were a bit early” Tonks replied.

Harry looked down at Fleur she wasn't paying any attention to the conversation she just looked down at the table. Harry sighted and so did Bill.

Harry called the waiter over. For a short moment the waiter goggled at Harry's scar then he pulled himself together and asked “What will it be Mr Potter?”

“I'd like a 'chocolate and raspberry with chopped nuts'” Harry said and turned to Tonks.

“Oh, just some coffee for me” Tonks said.

“Fleur?” Harry asked softly.

“What... oh, nothing for me thanks” Fleur replied, Harry could see that she was very thin much thinner then she had been during the championship. He suspected that she had not eaten much since her family died.

“And you sir?” The waiter asked Bill.

“I think I'd like a 'chocolate and raspberry with chopped nuts' too” Bill said.

“Very well two 'chocolate and raspberry with chopped nuts' and one coffee?” the waiter asked.

“Make that three 'chocolate and raspberry with chopped nuts' Harry whispered to the waiter when no one was looking. He figured Fleur would probably eat if they pressed her a little; Tonks and Mrs Figg had done the same to him when he had felt like food didn't matter.

“As you wish” the waiter said and walked away.

It seemed as no one knew what to say, the Order was out of the question and the past summer was out of the question too due to Fleur. Finally, Bill broke the silence “So Harry got your OWLs yet?”

“Yeah looks as if I have a good chance in becoming an auror” Harry replied.

“That’s great Harry” Bill said.

“Heard of Hermione?” Harry asked.

“No I don’t even know what ickle Ron got, yet” Bill said jokingly.

“Ron got same as me more or less. Hermione got eleven Os” Harry said.

“She got eleven OWLs? I only got 9... mostly Es” Bill added proudly.

“No she got Eleven Os” Harry said.

“Eleven Os as in Outstanding?” Tonks asked raising her eyebrows.

“Impossible” Bill said.

“I know, but that is what she wrote” Harry said, they were interrupted as the Ice cream arrived.

“We only ordered two ‘chocolate and raspberry with chopped nuts’” Bill said.

“No it’s all right why don’t you take the last one Fleur?” Harry asked her. At the sound of her name she looked up.

“What?” Fleur asked.

“Our Ice cream arrived” Harry explained softly somehow, he felt very close to Fleur he supposed it had something to do with being an orphan and grieving.

“Oh” She said and looked down on her Ice cream.

"This is great" Bill exclaimed. "They would make a success with this in Egypt"

"Yeah" Harry agreed, not that he had ever been to Egypt but this ice cream could make a success anywhere.

"Go on Fleur its great" Bill said.

Fleur sighted and took a bite.

"See" Bill said with a huge grin.

Once Fleur had taken her first bite she didn't stop until her plate was empty. She was obviously very hungry once she gave in to it. When all of them were done, Harry called the waiter over.

"Could I have the check please?" Harry asked him.

"Oh" The waiter looked very uncomfortable "It was on the house"

"Are you sure?" Harry asked.

"Yes, could I have your autograph for my son?" He asked very fast. Harry blushed. The waiter handed him a quill and a parchment. Harry wrote his name as neatly as he could on the parchment without taking to much time.

"Thanks" said the waiter and shook Harry's hand. Before Harry could reply, the waiter had walked away. Tonks and Bill hade huge grins on their faces Fleur also looked up at him but didn't smile.

"It's not funny!" Harry exclaimed a bit irritated.

"Sorry Harry" Bill said.

"Shall we get going?" Tonks asked them.

"Yeah, we're all ready." Bill said looking down at Fleur.

"Where are we going?" Fleur and Harry asked in unison.

"You'll see" Bill said.

“Grab this and hold on to your stuff” Tonks said and held out an old teddy bear.

Harry had just enough time to notice that Fleur too had a huge trunk next to her before he again that day felt a tug behind his navel and were off by portkey.

Harry managed not to fall when they landed he just stumbled slightly. Tonks of course fell to the ground again but she was the only one.

“Perfect” Tonks said angrily she had fallen in a puddle of water and was all wet.

Harry couldn’t help grinning.

“Very funny Harry” She snapped.

“Sorry” He apologized and helped her up. He looked around he hadn’t noticed where they were until now Grimmauld Place right outside nr 12.

“You’re a member of...” Harry began but got interrupted by Tonks who stood on his foot.

“We need you to make sure this is Fleur, Harry” Tonks told him

“Why shouldn’t I be ME” Fleur asked indignantly “Can’t you tell who I am, Bill?”

“Of course I can but we better follow the procedure” Bill replied. Fleur was glaring at him and Tonks.

“Harry you know what to do?” Tonks asked him.

“Yeah, give me a moment” Harry said and concentrated very hard and tried to remember something that only Fleur could know.

“What did you say about me almost two years ago on Halloween?” Harry asked her.

Fleur looked surprised for a short moment.

"I said you were a little boy and too young to compete"

"Positive" Harry said.

"What do I always trip over in there?" Tonks asked Harry.

"The umbrella stand" Harry replied "more then anything else"

"And what does it look like" Tonks asked Bill.

"A trolls leg" Bill replied.

"Good" Tonks stated and handed an envelope to Fleur.

"The Ord..." Fleur begun but Bill and Tonks hushed her.

"Just follow the directions there" Bill said.

Fleur looked around confused for a moment "but where is..."

"Just focus on it" Tonks interrupted her. To Harry number 12 Grimmauld place was in plain sight after a short moment of focusing on what he had read in his letter that he had gotten the first time he came here. He looked at Fleur to see if she had noticed number 12 yet after a few seconds he saw her jaw drop.

"Let's get inside I'm freezing" Tonks said and walked up to the house she was carrying Hedwig's cage Harry followed her closely and a bit after him Fleur and Bill. The building was repainted and looked much nicer the lawn was mowed and the bushes pruned. When they reached the house, Tonks reach for the doorbell.

Chapter 3 Fleur Delacour

"Don't ring...." Harry said hastily but Tonks had already rung the bell.

"Sorry" Tonks said when she realized what she had done. They could hear the screams from the painting of Mrs Black through the door "MUDBLOODS! FILTH! IN THE HOUSE OF BLACK"

Fleur looked horrified.

"Don't worry it's just a mad painting" Bill told her. The door swung open Mrs Weasley stood in front of him and Tonks.

"Oh Harry how nice to see you, hello Tonks, Bill and you must be Fleur. I'm Mrs Weasley."

They all greeted her back and she let them in.

"Try to keep it down we don't want to upset old Mrs Black again" Mrs Weasley said as she led them past the portraits and down to the kitchen.

"Harry" Ron exclaimed as he entered the kitchen "Good to see you mate"

"You too Ron"

"Hermione" Harry said as she hugged him.

"Hi Harry are you all right with visions..." Hermione stopped abruptly when she saw that Fleur was standing beside him.

"You already met Fleur" Harry said in an attempt to break the sudden silence that filled the room.

"Oh, Yes of course! Hello Fleur" Hermione said.

"Nice to see you again, Hermione, Ron" Fleur said politely doing her best not to look sad.

"You too" Ron said plainly, Harry was relieved to see that Ron seemed to have outgrown his crush on Fleur.

“Ron will you set the tables?” Mrs Weasley said “Hermione could you go and get some butterbeer dear?”

“Harry why don’t you show Fleur up to her room she will be sharing with Ginny and Hermione” She continued “Bill can I have a word with you?”

They all stumbled off, and left Harry and Fleur alone in the doorway to the kitchen.

“Right follow me” Harry said and walked back up the stairs.

“Harry are we in Sirius Black’s home?” Fleur asked him in a whisper.

Why oh why did she have to ask him such a hard question? He thought bitterly.

“Yes, we are” He answered shortly.

“Why? And what’s the order of the phoenix?” he couldn’t see her expression because he walked up the stairs in front of him and she couldn’t see his face this made it a bit easier to talk about.

“Sirius black was my godfather, he was innocent” He choked out no one knew that he was innocent they didn’t even know he was dead. He felt hot tears rolling down his cheeks. Why did he have to cry in front of Fleur of all people why not Mrs Weasley or Tonks or even Hermione or Ginny. He kept his head turned away from her he wouldn’t let her see he wiped his eyes and hoped he would stop crying.

“He ‘was’, what did he do?”

Harry’s tears flow even more now yet he managed to keep them silence.

“He” He started but felt that his voice wouldn’t hold so he took a pause and a deep breath “got murdered” he managed to choke out he hoped Fleur couldn’t tell how badly he was crying. He hurried along and up to the stairs but when he got to the top and was about to turn and walk down the corridor to the girls room when Fleur

grabbed his shoulder and turned him around. He tried to pull away but when he saw that Fleur was crying as well he didn't.

"I'm sorry about you godfather" She whispered as though her voice wouldn't support her and hugged him. He found himself crying hard on his shoulder and after a few moments, he whispered "I'm sorry about you parents and Gabrielle" At these words she cried even harder down on his shoulder. It was a very odd moment as they sobbed on each other shoulders though it felt very good.

"I haven't really cried since it happened" Harry confessed when both of them managed to control their tears.

"Me neither" She replied "On my own, but not in front of any one"

"Me too" Harry said. It was a very odd moment their feelings were so open to each other he didn't think he could lie to her if his life depended on it.

"How did you know I was crying?" he asked her after a few moments of silence.

"I just knew" She replied simply. Harry had totally forgotten that she was a veela but now he figured that this might be one of her veela powers.

"Ready to continue" He asked her.

"Yeah" She said softly "So what is the Order"

"The Order is a group of people that is gathered by Albus Dumbledore to fight Voldemort." He said and then added "My parents belonged to it before they got killed"

"And you're a member?" She asked him after a few moments.

"No, they won't let me. They say I'm too young and that I have to finish school"

"Told you years ago" She said teasingly.

They both laughed. It was incredible how simple Fleur was to talk to it was as if he'd known her for all his life.

"This is it your room" he said as he knocked on the door "If you get lonely our room is just up the stairs right above" He couldn't believe his ears when he heard what he'd just said but to his relief Fleur only laughed.

"You wish" She said as the door opened and Ginny looked out

"Oh Harry I've been so worried" Ginny said and through her arms around him.

"Hello Ginny" Harry said and then when she let him go he added "This is Fleur, Fleur this is Ginny your roommate"

"I know" Ginny said "I was in third year when you two were champions, remember?"

"Uh" Fleur said uncertainly she clearly did not remember Ginny. Ginny however only laughed.

"It's okay" Ginny said "I was supporting Harry after all"

"Right" Fleur said "Bill has told me so much about you"

"Yeah I bet... I can see why he likes you" Ginny said with a wicked grin. "Come in I'll show you where you sleep"

Fleur followed her inside and Harry walked up the stairs and entered his and Ron's room. He dropped the trunk on his bed and placed Hedwig's cage on the desk. He smiled to himself, what had just happened? He and Fleur who barely knew each other had cried out on each others shoulders and then they had joked as if they'd know each other since they were born. He didn't expect this when he got up this morning. He started to unpack his things he glanced nervously at the Foe Glass when he unpacked it, only distant shadows. He lay down in his bed and gathered his thoughts staring blindly up at the ceiling.

Someone must have upset Mrs Black because she started to scream "FILTHY HALF-BREED! SCUM! BLOOD TRAITOR!" after a few moments she gave a final shriek and fell quiet. Finally Harry thought.

It was rather unfair, Voldemort started it all and he was to pay for not dying. He couldn't even eat ice cream with his friends without being idolized, but then there were Ice cream in the muggle world too. If this went on like this, he would have to live as much as possible in the muggle world. He wondered how Dumbledore dealt with it, he was after all a celebrity, but Dumbledore had earned his fame during many years Harry had gotten it by most of it by accident and at the terrible price of his parents.

There was a knock on the door "Harry it is lunch" Said Hermione's voice through the door. Harry walked over to the door and went out.

"Ginny and Fleur are already down in the kitchen" Hermione said.

"Oh, so what's been going on" Harry asked her.

"I don't know, Harry. They won't tell us anything." Hermione said in a low voice as they walked down towards the kitchens. "But I figure" She added in an even lower voice "Voldemort is trying to get the goblins over to his side"

"Do you think they will" Harry asked her.

"I don't know, I think that's why they invite Fleur to the Order. They need more spies at Gringotts" Hermione said and sighed "Loads off all the problems in the wizarding world wouldn't be possible if we weren't so intolerant to other species, like house elves"

Harry's went rigid. "Kreacher" He whispered through gritted teeth. He blamed Kreacher for Sirius death almost as much as he blamed Bellatrix Lestrange.

"Don't you dare blame him" Hermione snapped.

"WHY?" Harry yelled.

Hermione looked taken aback for a short moment but then she said as calmly as she could "Kreacher was brain washed for many years, he wasn't sane. Harry I understand that Sirius death..."

"SO HOUSE ELVES DOESN'T HAVE THE RIGHT TO JOIN THE DARK LORD?" Harry yelled at her.

Hermione didn't respond.

"They can't all be saints Hermione" Harry said and tried to calm himself.

"Dumbledore..." Hermione started.

"He's wrong" Harry interrupted her loudly.

They stood in silence for a couple of moments it was a wonder why Mrs Black hadn't started screaming. Hermione must have thought the same thing because she walked over to the wall where she hung Harry followed her.

The curtains that hung in front of the painting were gone only the top of them were left and they were burned black. The frame of the painting was the only thing left it had several black burn marks as well.

"They burned her" Hermione stated her eyes had gone wide.

"Seems so" Harry agreed. "Look I'm sorry I yelled at you but I'm not going to let Kreacher get away with this."

"Oh, Harry Kreacher is dead" Hermione said sadly.

Harry felt a grim sort of satisfaction, he wasn't sorry at all. "How come?"

"He walked into Remus bedroom one night and it was a full moon..." She trailed off.

"What?" Harry asked.

"Remus takes Wolfsbane potion, but it's not one hundred percent..." Hermione trailed off again.

“What did he do to him?” Harry asked.

“I don’t know... whatever wolfs do when they get annoyed” She said very fast “But it all went very quick Moody was down in his room in a minute but it was way too late by then. It was horrible. Of course, Mrs Weasley wouldn’t let anyone go near his room but the way Remus looked when he got out of there covered in blood it took him days to clean up the mess even with magic. Remus blames himself, but it wasn’t really his fault, I mean Kreacher had a neck of speaking aloud I imagine he said some stupid stuff about Sirius or something and it just became too much for him he is a werewolf after all. Remus has taken Sirius death very badly he has lost weight and Mrs Weasley is fussing over him as if he was her child. She hasn’t taken Sirius death too good either but she tries to be strong for the rest of us. And she’s much happier nowadays too we figure Percy has apologized to her, but she tries to act as if nothing”

Hermione was rambling it was her way of letting off her emotions so Harry didn’t interrupt her.

“Ginny was very sad too wouldn’t eat until Bill talked to her I don’t think she really understood how dangerous it was that day until Sirius... anyway, she always loved Bill. She loves her other brother too, but Bill is her idol being the oldest and all. Ron’s been really great about it considering the circumstances. He helped me a lot when I was... sad” She trailed off and looked as if she’d said too much. Harry couldn’t see anything wrong in Ron comforting Hermione especially as he’d cried out on Fleur’s shoulder.

“Ron is great” Harry said.

“Yeah, he is” She agreed.

“So where’s Remus?” He asked her.

“He’s away on a mission; I think Dumbledore has him too speak with other werewolves. That’s another group Voldemort wants in his army.”

“Do you know when he’ll be back?”

"No, he's been gone for a few days so we reckon he'll be back soon" Hermione answered. They walked away from the burnt portrait of Mrs Black towards the kitchen.

"Hey! Congratulations! Eleven Os that's great" Harry burst out as he remembered.

"Yeah thanks, but it's scary too" She said with a small smile.

"Why scary?" He asked her.

"I looked it up in Hogwarts a History this morning" She said

"And" He pressed on.

"Last person who got eleven Os was Tom Riddle" She said.

Harry was shocked. "The Tom Riddle, Voldemort?"

"Yes" Hermione said.

"He didn't like divination either?" Harry joked.

Hermione smiled.

"Don't worry Hermione, it's just OWLs" Harry said.

"Yeah, well everyone is going to expect things from me now, won't they" Hermione said "They will expect me to become the next Dumbledore or a dark lord or something"

"Ah, there you are I was beginning to think you forgotten" He heard Mrs Weasley's voice from the kitchen door.

"Sorry Mrs Weasley" Hermione said and they entered the kitchen. Ginny, Ron, Bill and Fleur were already eating.

"Oh, Harry I'm so Sorry I lost my temper and I burned your painting" Fleur said as she saw him.

"My painting?" Harry asked bewildered.

“Harry dear there is something we need to talk about” Said Mrs Weasley.

“What?” He asked he had no idea what they were on about.

Mrs Weasley looked suddenly very uncomfortable.

“Sirius had a will” She said and after a short moment she continued “He leaves every thing to you and Remus” Harry looked down.

“Oh” He muttered.

They ate in silence or at least they didn’t force Harry into any discussions which he was grateful for, he didn’t feel like talking. He had looked forward to see his friends all summer but now he wanted to be back with Tonks on Privet Drive. Life on Privet drive was very simple after all and with company, it was even enjoyable. He wondered where Tonks was, he remembered that she’d said they were very busy. She was probably following death eaters or something Harry figured. He wasn’t very hungry so decided to leave lunch as early as he could.

“I have to unpack” He said he knew that the reason he gave was very poor but to his relief every one accepted it.

“Yeah me too” Said Fleur and walked out behind Harry when the door closed behind them they turned to each other.

“I’m so sorry Harry I didn’t know” She said softly to him.

“It’s all right” He said “I just didn’t think it would be so hard to be back here” He explained. Where did that come from, he never spoke this easily about his feelings much less to a beautiful French girl that he hardly knew.

“I’m sorry about the painting too” She said.

“Don’t be they been trying to get it off the wall for over a year. Don’t think they thought of burning the canvas though”

They stood in silence for a long moment.

“Let’s get upstairs” Harry finally said and walked up the stairs Fleur followed him. When they stood outside the girl’s rooms Harry found that he didn’t want to be alone, he looked over at Fleur she didn’t enter her room. They stood for a moment in silence.

“Fleur” He said at the same time as she said “Harry”

“Yes” they chorused. Harry was silent for a moment to let Fleur continue only Fleur waited for him to continue too.

“You first” they said at the same time.

They laughed.

“Ladies first” He said.

“Oh, all right. Do you really need to unpack?” She asked him with pronouncing the word ‘need’ very clearly.

“No, I just couldn’t stay” He said but then added before she thought he wanted to be alone “Would you like a tour? I mean if you don’t need to unpack”

“Oh, No, I mean sure I’d like a tour” She said with a small smile.

“All right, as you know this is Black manor” He told her every thing about the house he knew but didn’t mention Kreacher or Sirius. After about an hour, they where standing in Mrs Black’s bed room with Buckbeak the hippogriff.

“A Hippogriff?” She asked in surprise.

“Yeah, we helped him escape he was going to be executed by the Committee for the Disposal of Dangerous Creatures” Harry said.

“Why?” Asked Fleur.

“He attacked a student that insulted him” Harry said, he felt angry at the mere memory but then his anger faded as he remembered that Draco Malfoy’s father Lucius Malfoy where in Azkaban.

“Why are you smiling?” She asked.

“Do you remember Draco Malfoy a Slytherin in the same year as me?” He asked her.

“Yeah, I know him” She said grimly.

“You do?” He asked her.

“The Malfoys are an old French pureblood family” Fleur informed him.

“Let me guess you are related distantly?” Harry said

“Yeah, I think so anyway we didn’t speak much about our family since we are well...” She trailed off.

“Blood traitors” Harry said for her.

“Yeah and ‘Half-Breeds’ as she put it” Fleur said looking away from him and patted Buckbeak Harry knew she meant Mrs Black by ‘she’.

“Why” He asked.

“I’m part veela, Harry. Didn’t you know?”

“Does that count, isn’t that a good thing?” He asked uncertainly.

“Of course you think that, you’re a male” Fleur said sadly.

“I know I am” He joked but then he added “So it isn’t a good thing?”

“Not only, I’m only 1/4 veela and I got the most horrible temper you can imagine. I scared Ginny half to death when I burned Mrs Black.” She explained.

“Is that how you burned her?” Harry asked remembering the veela at the world cup throwing fire.

“Yeah, since I’m not a pure veela I can’t conjure fire unless I’m really mad”

“Well it must have its advantages” Harry said with a wide grin. Then when he realised what he just had said he blushed brick red.

Fleur however didn't seem to mind. "Yeah, sometimes" she went quiet for a moment then she spoke up "But you should know all about that being famous"

"What do you mean?" He asked her.

"How do you know if people like you, or just to be with you because you are famous?" Fleur explained.

"Okay I get your point" Harry said, he immediately thought about Ginny and the way she'd acted at his first visit to the Burrow and about the Creevy brothers.

"But it has to be kind of fun sometimes" He asked.

"Yeah" Fleur sighed "I suppose" She said but it didn't sound very convincing.

"You don't like it?" Harry asked her seriously

"No, sometimes I dress up in ugly dresses and use makeup to make me ugly just so people won't gawp at me" She confessed.

"You do?" Harry said he couldn't imagine why someone as beautiful as Fleur wouldn't like to be seen, if he was that beautiful he wouldn't mind people looking at him or would he? People always looked at him and he hated it more than everything. He suddenly understood how Fleur felt, because he knew that feeling very well. She had gotten something by birth that made people gawp at her and so had Harry, well almost any way. Neither of them had known when they were kids, he thought, he really had many things in common with Fleur.

She sighed and didn't say anything she looked a bit sad as if she'd hoped he would understand.

"I do to!" He said with a smile.

"What?" She asked "You put on make up and wear dresses"

Harry laughed.

"I don't wear dresses, and especially not ugly ones" He said "But I got make up for my birth day, concealment cream" he pointed to his scar "I would have put it on today if I'd known I was going to Diagon alley"

She smiled at him "You know for a short moment there I thought you wouldn't understand"

"Sorry" he said and smiled back.

That's it! Stay tuned for Chapter 4 Innocent Love.

Chapter 4 Innocent Love

"I should get down and help to prepare for dinner" Harry finally said
"Especially as I skived off after lunch"

"I'll go too" Fleur said and stood up from the old bed she had been sitting on.

"Oh, you don't have too. You're a guest" He said.

"Don't be stupid Harry" She said.

They walked down to the kitchen together chatting happily. They were the first to arrive the kitchen.

"They'll be along any minute" Harry said looking at his watch.

They both sat down at the end of the long table.

"So you didn't even know that magic existed until you turned eleven" She asked him incredulously.

"Yeah, you can imagine my shock. I thought my parents were killed in a car crash and that I got my scar from that crash" He said and sighed, he usually didn't feel this sad when he talked about his parents but the fact that Fleur knew how he felt made his emotions multiply. Fleur seemed to sense this because she hugged him.

"So I guess that you found out you were special in that age too?" He asked her.

"Yeah" Fleur said "When I started school some boys became very clumsy near me and worse. It's not so bad if you want attention and I do want that sometimes but when you don't feel like it, it's horrible. Mum had told me how it was to be a part veela but I never imagined it to be so bad. Mum's sister aunt Nancy teaches at Beauxbaton she helped me alot"

At that moment, the door to the kitchen opened, Bill and Ginny entered. Bill looked over at Fleur and then at Harry and then at both of them still clutching each other. Then he looked up at Harry again.

Apparently, Bill was as hotheaded and quick to judge situations as Ron is because he turned around and walked out the door in a way that Harry thought only Ron was capable of. Ginny on the hand looked daggers at Fleur, and Harry was quite sure that veela powers or not Fleur couldn't match Ginny's furious expression. He was very glad that Ginny didn't look that way at him he was quite sure for a short moment that she had the power of a basilisk. Harry and Fleur suddenly realised that they still held each other and let go.

Ginny seemed a bit less angry at this, she turned and ran after Bill.

"Guess that settles it" Harry muttered.

"What?" Fleur snapped.

"Bill really likes you" Harry said.

He looked up at Fleur she seemed to be thinking along the same lines "What do I do?"

"I have no idea, it was just a hug" Harry said.

"Harry do you like me" She asked him.

"Yes I think so... I don't know... Maybe...It's odd" He said truthfully he couldn't make out his feeling for her at all.

Fleur nodded sadly.

"Look Fleur" Harry said trying to use logic "I think I really like you but it's not the same as with other girls" He thought of Cho and how he'd felt about her.

"Do you like me" Harry asked her and to his big surprise he didn't feel nervous at least not as nervous as he had imagined.

"Yeah I really do Harry, but I really like Bill too" She admitted.

"Harry what do I do, should I go after Bill?" She asked him urgently.

"I'm sorry Fleur but I don't know, it was just a hug" Harry replied thoughtfully, he didn't want Fleur to leave but he was not going to say that.

"I think I've hurt him" Fleur said looking very sad.

"Yeah" Harry agreed but when he saw that Fleur was very close to tears he added "But he's a Weasley they may seem thick but they will come around in the end"

"Are all Weasley's like that?" She asked him and before he could answer she said "I thought it just was Bill"

"Yeah, but I'm not to sure about Ginny I've never seen anybody look so furious" He admitted.

"Hungry are we" Mrs Weasley asked them as she entered the kitchen "I don't blame you. You are both thin as sticks. Why don't you start making a salad Fleur dear? Harry you can set the table so that it's done. It'll only be us and Arthur and Remus is coming back tonight"

"Nine plates" Harry said to himself, he doubted very much that Bill would come down for dinner if he anything like Ron and Ginny would probably keep him company.

After a few moments, Harry heard the door open. Mr Weasley and Remus entered the room. Arthur looked the same as always, Remus on the other hand looked even shabbier then usual, his clothes hang loosely around him as if he had lost loads of weight and his cloak wore even more patches then last time he'd seen him.

"I don't know Arthur most of the ministry agrees with Umbridge at that point" Remus said heavily. But then he looked over at Harry and smiled "Hello Harry"

"Hello" Harry replied.

"Ah, Harry good to see you" Mr Weasley said and smiled.

"You are early, this is Fleur Delacour" She gestured towards Fleur "Fleur, this is Remus Lupin and this is Arthur my husband"

They all greeted each other politely.

“Why don’t the two of you get washed up dinner will be done in a few moments. Oh and get the children while you are at it” Mr Weasley said in a motherly bossy way. Remus and Mr Weasley obeyed.

After a few minutes, the dinner was ready and after another few minutes Ron and Hermione entered, followed by Remus and Mr Weasley.

“Bill said he wasn’t hungry and Ginny said she felt ill” Mr Weasley said in a concerned voice.

“Oh, I’ll go and make sure they are all right” Mrs Weasley said and made for the door.

“It can wait until after dinner dear” Mr Weasley said “They are both perfectly fine”

The food was delicious as usual when Mrs Weasley cooked.

“Had a good summer Harry?” Remus asked.

“Yeah great, I got good OWLs too so I’m going for Auror” Harry said proudly.

“That’s great your mother would have been so proud of you” Remus said. Harry couldn’t help to feel a bit disappointed he wanted his father to be proud too “James would have been proud too of course but he didn’t put as much value in school work as Lily did”

Harry loved to hear about his parents even if the details were insignificant. Arthur turned over to him “You heard that Dolores Umbridge got three years in Azkaban?”

“Yeah, wish there still was dementors there though” Harry said grimly.

“Yes, well anyway we were hoping to get some of her laws regarding werewolf lifted. To do so we may need to prove that Dolores Umbridge were not only out of order when she sent the dementors

after you but that she has been misusing her position at the ministry at several other incidents for personal beliefs” Mr Weasley explained.

Harry thought for a moment he had a vague scar on the back of his right hand, would it count as evidence he wondered. If it could help Remus and the other werewolves, it was worth a try.

“I still have a scar since my detentions” He said in a low voice, he regretted it the moment he said it, why couldn’t he have waited until he was alone with Mr Weasley or Remus.

“You got a scar from her detentions?” Mrs Weasley shrieked.

“You can hardly see it” Harry said hastily.

“Harry, can I see it?” Remus asked sternly.

“Yeah” Harry said as he held out his hand and flexed it so that Remus would see it.

“I... must... not... tell... lies” Remus read.

“She used a Blood Quill on you” Mr Weasley asked him seriously.

“I don’t know, when I wrote ‘I must not tell lies’ it appeared on my hand” Harry replied.

“WHY DIDN’T YOU TELL ANYONE” Mrs Weasley yelled at him. He could see that Ron and Hermione were very interested in what they were eating and didn’t look up.

“There, there Molly...” Mr Weasley said soothingly.

“I’ll get her” Mrs Weasley said. Harry could see from where Ginny got her furious expression.

“When did you do these detentions?” Remus asked him.

“First two weeks of the terms and then the week after that interview” Harry replied looking down on his food.

“Harry Blood Quills were declared illegal by the ministry decades ago” Mr Weasley said “If you’d told anyone we could have help you”

“I didn’t want her to win” Harry admitted.

“You didn’t want her to win?” Mrs Weasley asked incredulously “YOU GOT A SCAR FOR LIFE!” She yelled and stood up.

“Molly please” Mr Weasley begged and she sat down again.

“Harry can any one verify this?” Remus asked him.

“Yeah, R...” He didn’t want to bring Ron and Hermione in to this but in the short time it took for him to say ‘Lee Jordon’ Mrs Weasley stood up again.

“You knew about this Ronald Weasley” She asked.

“Yes” Ron confessed.

“I did too” Hermione chipped in not let Ron take all the blame.

“Why didn’t you tell anyone? I thought you had some sense! I thought they made you two prefects for a reason! How could you not tell anyone! Minerva would have known what to do!” They are letting her get to them Harry thought the Twins had said that you had to ward her off early on or it would be much worse.

“I made them not to” Harry interrupted her.

Mrs Weasley looked lost for a short moment and Mr Weasley seized the opportunity and pushed her down back in her chair.

“Any one else knew about this?” Remus asked him.

“Yeah Lee Jordon got a detention with her too” Harry said.

“No matter what I do” Mrs Weasley said tears spilling out of her eyes. Mr Weasley hugged her “No matter what I do, something happens” she sobbed into Mr Weasley’s shoulder.

“It’s okay” Mr Weasley said softly.

"I'm sorry" Harry said he wasn't really sorry about the scar, he was sorry he told her this way.

"Oh, don't apologize Harry dear" Mrs Weasley said "It's not your fault, it's that Umbridge's fault"

Harry could feel Fleur's hand grab his under the table. She squeezed it gently to show support. Harry smiled slightly and squeezed back. He felt much calmer when he felt Fleur's soft warm hand. He found that when he squeezed it gently he could feel her blood throb; it was a very nice feeling.

"Harry I have to thank you, for believing in Fred and George they are doing so well. I never thought they would ever take any kind of responsibility and now they are responsible businessmen with their own little shop. I'm such a terrible mother I should have been the one to support their idea." Mrs Weasley said sniffing loudly between words.

"No your not, I think you are terrific" Harry disagreed aloud before he realized it. It felt very odd to admit in front of his best friend that he thinks his mother is terrific.

Mrs Weasley smiled at him.

"I'm so sorry dear what must you think of me causing a scene like this" Mrs Weasley said to Fleur.

"No don't" Said Fleur "I'm used to much worse, veela blood you know" She added and smiled slightly. Harry still held her hand and thought that veela blood can't possible be as bad as Fleur thinks it is.

"Oh" Mrs Weasley said and smiled.

They finished dinner and Harry helped to clear up with Ron who had problems not staring at Fleur when he thought she didn't see. It was even a bit extraordinary how much Fleur seemed to affect Ron especially as Ron hadn't seemed taken by Fleur at all a few hours earlier. Fleur and Hermione were still sitting at the table talking happily in French. Harry was quite sure Fleur was ignoring Ron the

same way as he'd ignored Ginny when she put her sleeve in something or dropped something a couple of years ago.

"So what have you been up to all summer?" Harry asked Ron just as he glanced over at Fleur.

"What?" Ron asked.

"I asked what you have done over the summer" Harry asked again.

"What" Ron asked again.

"Get a grip Ron" Harry snapped at him "You're embarrassing yourself"

Ron blushed and finally managed to look away from her.

"What were you saying?" Ron asked him.

"I asked what you have done over the summer" Harry asked again.

"Oh, not much been trying to teach Hermione play chess but she just wont get it"

"Hey heard, you got auror grades" Harry exclaimed.

"Yeah, you too Hermione told me. Do you think it's worth it?" Ron asked.

"Course why wouldn't it?" Harry asked he knew Ron was joking in a serious sort of way.

"You do realize that Snape will kill us if we sign up for potions" Ron said "And if he doesn't, two years of potions more will definitely finish me off"

"I get your point but we can't very well let Hermione take potions all by herself can we?" said Harry.

"No I suppose, can you imagine the look on Snape's face though" Ron asked with a grin.

“We should borrow Colin’s camera” Harry stated with an equally wide grin.

“Why should you borrow his camera” They heard Hermione’s voice from behind them.

“Can you imagine Snape’s face when the three of us turns up in potions?” Harry asked her. Ron didn’t say anything because next to Hermione stood Fleur.

“Who’s Snape” Fleur asked them she didn’t seem to notice Ron at all Hermione however glared furiously at Ron.

“He’s... he’s” Ron stammered.

“Our Potion teacher” Harry finished for him Hermione glared even harder at Ron “He kind of hoped that I wouldn’t take Potions”

“Yeah” Said Hermione loudly trying to take Ron’s attention from Fleur.

Ron snapped back to life “Yeah” He agreed with Hermione and looked down at her. Harry could sense another Ron and Hermione roar coming up, normally he could break up their arguments but this time he doubted it. He knew he better get Fleur out of here before they started.

“Hey Fleur, would you hmm...” think, think Harry thought panicky a good reason “help me with my History of Magic essay”

“I’m not good in history of magic” Fleur admitted obviously she didn’t see their argument coming.

Hermione did however “He hasn’t done his Transfiguration essay either” she said very coolly to Fleur.

“Oh” Fleur said, she seemed to realize that she wasn’t wanted and turned away and walked towards the door Harry followed her. The second before the door closed they could here Hermione’s furious shriek “You are so tactless” Harry didn’t want to know what Ron replied to her but he was sure what ever it was it would cause Hermione’s fury to double at least.

“What was that all about” Fleur asked Harry as they walked up the stair towards their rooms.

“Didn’t you see how Ron looked at you?” Harry asked.

“Yeah... oh... I see” She said and smiled. “Are they a couple?”

“No, but they do tend to get jealous anyway” Harry said.

“Oh, but that’s stupid. If they like each other why don’t they do something about it?” She asked him. Harry was very uncomfortable with the subject. If they became a couple, what would that make Harry?

“I don’t know” Harry said sullenly.

“How long have they done this?” Fleur asked him eagerly.

“Since the Yule Ball when Hermione went with Victor” Harry said coolly.

“Are you jealous of Ron” Fleur asked carefully. Harry wasn’t jealous of Ron; he liked Hermione but not that way.

“No” Harry said irritably and opened the door to his and Ron’s room. Fleur hesitated on the doorstep as if she didn’t know if she was allowed to follow him inside.

“Look I’m sorry if I said anything stupid” Fleur said awkwardly.

“No, it’s just me come in and close the door” Harry replied.

“So care to tell me?” Fleur asked then added hastily “You don’t have to we could just do you Transfiguration essay”

“Are you threatening me” Harry joked though he didn’t really feel in the mood for jokes.

Fleur smiled politely.

“No, it’s just they are my best friends and we...” He railed off. Fleur seemed to have gotten the point however.

“Don’t take this the wrong way Harry but if they are happy together...” She trailed off, and left the last words unsaid Harry knew what they were ‘You should be happy for them’.

“I know, but it isn’t easy. Speaking of easy you really should go and talk to Bill” Harry said, he was sure off it now, and he was quite sure Fleur avoided the subject.

Fleur sighted “What do I tell him” She asked him worriedly. “What if he doesn’t want to speak to me?”

“If he doesn’t want to speak to you I hereby give you the right to flame him” Harry said in a vain effort to cheer her up.

Fleur sighted again.

“What if I don’t love him” Fleur asked desperately “Harry what if I love you”

Harry froze he had not expected Fleur to say that. They were silent for a moment while they both gathered their thoughts and feeling. Harry couldn’t help it he really liked Fleur, she was so much like himself she understood things no one ever understood before, and she was nice and intelligent and really, really beautiful and they way it felt to just hold her hand. If it felt that good just holding somebody’s hand then it has to be love Harry realised. He knew he had to tell her otherwise she might just go on with Bill and forget all about him and he didn’t want that. Surprisingly he found that he was not that nervous about admitting it.

“I think I might love you” They both said at the same moment. Had the situation not been so tense he would have found it funny that they both used the same words, now he hardly noticed it. He knew the at the moment that she was telling him the truth, but something was wrong he didn’t feel any urge to kiss her. Was he just immature and was too young to enjoy a kiss he didn’t know what to think. Did Fleur expect him to kiss her, would he hurt her if he didn’t? Harry looked up at Fleur she looked up at him they looked at each other for a moment.

“You’ll have to go and tell Bill something” Harry stated, trying to change the mood from kissing mood. God why did I have to say that

Harry thought bitterly, even though it probably was the right thing to say, he didn't really want her to go to Bill.

"What should I tell him" Fleur asked now with a tingle of panic in her voice again.

"How close are you two?" Harry asked her seriously.

"We used to go out before everything happened" Fleur said carefully looking at Harry as if she expected him to be jealous or something or maybe it was a hint for him to kiss her Harry didn't.

"Do you love him?"

"Yeah but it's different, I mean I don't feel as close to him as to you but I" She blushed "want him"

Harry was silent, he couldn't think of anything to say millions of thought whirled through his head wasn't he good looking enough, or maybe too young, but she said she loved him, but Harry couldn't say he wanted her either, he didn't feel the urge to find out how it felt to kiss her or how her skin felt.

"I'm so sorry Harry I'm sorry I can't believe I just said that Harry, you are great looking and everything tall and handsome and green eyes" She said very quickly.

Harry found that he didn't need an apology so he interrupted her "Don't Fleur... I feel the same way, I mean I haven't even tried to kiss you" He grinned uncertainly in truth he'd never tried to kiss anyone, Cho had kissed him, he'd kissed her back of course but he would never dare to take the first step.

"Oh" Fleur said then she too grinned wickedly "You kiss loads of girls then?"

Harry blushed "Actually, no only one girl. But she actually kissed me" He confessed.

"I figured you don't strike me as the type who go around and kiss girls" Fleur said teasingly.

Harry blushed.

"Anyway, I really wanted to kiss her. I wondered what it felt like, how her lips and skin felt like." Harry said hoping to get his point across to Fleur. He wondered for a moment how he dared to speak of his feeling like this.

"Harry, I have to tell Bill something" Fleur said "Should I tell him that we might love each other or that we haven't done anything but hugging?"

"I don't know" Harry said "It all goes so fast, maybe it'll all be different by tomorrow, or next week"

Fleur smiled sadly "I don't think so"

"I don't think I will either, but for all I know it could be a love potion" Harry stated. It was really odd Harry thought he had always been terrified of admitting his emotions like this but Fleur somehow did not inspire that particular fear.

"Harry trust me if it were a love potion we wouldn't be talking" Fleur said grimly.

"How do you know?" Harry asked her.

"I'll tell you later" Fleur muttered.

They were silent for a moment.

"Tell Bill that we haven't done anything, that we're just friends and that we have a lot in common" Harry said.

"Harry, he'll hate me. I pushed him away when it happened and he was so nice to me and didn't push me to say anything. He was so patient and forgave me when I went all feathery on him and after all that I end up holding you, you haven't even seen my horrible side." She choked out and started to cry "He is so good to me" Harry put his arms around her.

"You love him too" He whispered to her.

“Yeah” She agreed still sobbing “It hurts so much”

“You’ll have to tell him that” Harry whispered.

Fleur nodded.

“Come on I’ll walk you to his door” Harry said and stood up.

Fleur followed him when they were standing outside Bill’s room Fleur hesitated.

“Harry I’m sorry” She whispered.

“I am sorry too, Fleur, good luck” He said and turned around.

Thanks for the reviews, prepare for next chapter. Chapter 5 Betrayal!

Chapter 5 Betrayal

The walk down to his room was one of the longest he'd ever walked. His emotions were running around in his body so viciously that it was a wonder he didn't fall over. He was so completely confused; he doubted he would ever be able to think straight again. What if Fleur was his true love and he let her go just like that? He might never find someone that understood him as well as Fleur did and yet he hardly knew anything about her and still he felt as if she knew him better than Ron and Hermione ever would. She had said she loved him, well as good as, and he'd told her he loved her. For short moments, he felt furiously jealous at Bill for having Fleur. He knew that Fleur wanted to be kissed by Bill and not Harry, but that was not why he was jealous of Bill he was jealous of him for wanting to kiss Fleur, how could Fleur be his true love if he didn't even have an urge to kiss her? Maybe there is something wrong with me Harry thought. Why wouldn't a boy of my age want to kiss Fleur, he knew Ron wouldn't mind at all. He stopped outside the door leading to his and Ron's room but didn't enter, he was too deep in his thoughts. He stood there for a few moments until he heard a giggle from inside.

"Ron you great prat" Hermione's voice giggled through the door.

"Yeah well, I did" Ron's voice answered.

"You are so stupid you know?" Hermione said.

"Every one is stupid next to you" Ron replied.

"Shut up and kiss me again" Hermione's voice said and Harry's stomach clenched horribly.

"Just what I needed my best friends are snogging each other" He muttered and turned away from the door he couldn't help feel angry and betrayed by them, he needed them now but they obviously didn't have time for him.

Ron's voice sounded through the door "Wish you hadn't shrunk your teeth now"

"Why?" She giggled.

"They would have been much more interesting to kiss" Ron said in a teasing voice.

"You really like me don't you" Hermione asked in a tone Harry had never heard Hermione use before, it was seductive and daring.

Harry practically ran away from their door, he didn't want to hear Ron's reply to that. He had never felt so alone or lost, his best friends were in love, and the girl he loved was with another boy, Tonks's was on duty and Sirius... he sighed heavily.

"All right Harry?" He heard Remus's voice say from behind him.

Harry turned around, he opened his mouth to answer 'Yeah' but as it was a direct, and rather painful at the moment, lie he closed his mouth again.

"Care for a cup of tea?" Remus went on when he saw Harry's expression.

"Sure" Harry replied and followed Remus to his room. His room was very empty almost unfurnished considering that this is where he lived. There were only a table two chairs a drawer and a bed. Remus conjured a teapot, filled it with boiling water from his wand, and summoned some tea bags and sugar from the kitchen.

"Hope you don't mind, tea bags" Remus said.

"No, it's okay" Harry reassured him.

"So how's stuff" Harry asked awkwardly, before Remus had the chance to ask him the same question.

"Oh, well better and better for every day that passes" Remus said looking down at his cup of tea. They both sipped their tea in silence for a few moments.

"How about you Harry?" Remus asked.

"I'm..." He meant to say 'fine' but couldn't "This is my worst day ever" He choked out instead.

"How come?" Remus asked gently still focusing on his tea.

"Everything went wrong" Harry stated then added to himself mostly
"Wish I stayed at privet drive"

"Girl trouble" Remus said it was not a question but a statement.

Harry looked up at him he was smiling slightly at him.

"You could say that" Harry said sadly looking down on his tea again.

"Harry you have too know that there are many girls out there and most girls you meet at your age will be wrong later in life" Remus said comfortingly.

Harry sighted.

"She told me she loved me" Harry said.

"As I said Harry, things that seem certain at your age may very well change over a few weeks" Remus said.

"Yeah, well she told me less then an hour ago" Harry snapped.

"Oh, sorry Harry" Remus said and wrinkled his forehead.

"Are we talking about Hermione?" Remus asked after a few moments.

"No" Harry said.

"Is it Ginny then?" Remus asked.

"No" Harry said "It's Fleur" He had not been planning telling any one about this but he was to fragile all his nerves seemed to have gotten a hundred times more sensitive and lacked for the moment the ability or instinct to cover his private thoughts.

Remus choked on his tea.

"And you love her?" Remus asked.

"Yeah, told her too" Harry stated dreamily staring intently on his tea.

“So Bill is the...” Remus left the question unasked.

“Yeah, she loves him too” Harry said taking a sip from his tea.

“Did you spend much time with her during the tournament?” Remus asked him.

“No, just hello’s” Harry said.

Remus looked a bit confused.

“So you just discovered it today?” Remus asked him.

“Yes” Harry answered; he could feel his temper raising this was getting a bit annoying.

“Have you kissed her?” Remus asked him awkwardly.

“No” Harry said his temper raising another notch.

“And yet you are sure you are in love with her?” Remus asked.

“Yes” Harry snapped.

“What do you see in her?” Remus asked after a short moment.

“She understands how it feels to have people gaping at you, and she is intelligent and funny” Harry said trying to control his temper he didn’t know why but he was really angry.

“And very pretty” Remus added.

“I know she is” Harry snapped again.

“Calm down Harry, it’s not as if any thing is decided this moment. You’ll see Fleur again tomorrow” Remus said soothingly.

Harry was still furious, but Remus gave him no reason to yell at him so he managed to control his temper.

“Better get back to my room and break them up” Harry muttered and got up.

“Who?” Remus asked innocently.

“Ron and Hermione of course” Harry said and walked out the door. He could hear Remus voice bidding him a good night but he didn’t respond. His chat with Remus had not done him any good; it just made him feel stupid because he had fallen for her so quickly and immature for not even kissing her.

He opened the door to his room and saw that Hermione had fallen asleep on top of Ron who too was fast asleep sitting in the only chair in the room. It looked very uncomfortable for Ron but he had a wide smile across his face so it couldn’t be that bad. He walked around them so that he could see Hermione’s face, she wasn’t smiling but she looked very peaceful. He had seen her sleeping many times in various books she had been reading and even though some of the books had been interesting even by his measures, she had never looked so peaceful. How could he be angry with them when they were so happy together? He would have to wake them up though or Ron wouldn’t be able to stand straight for the rest of his life.

“Wake up” He said softly but none of them stirred. He had a funny urge to go and ask Mr Weasley if he could borrow his camera, their expression when they woke up would be priceless.

“Hey, wake up you two” He said this time Hermione stirred and opened her eyes she smiled for a short moment before she saw Harry.

“Harry!” She gulped and fell to the floor bringing Ron and the chair with her. It was rather funny seeing them wake up like this. Ron stood in an instance looking wildly around. Hermione turned so red that her face was the same colour as Ron’s hair.

“Harry” Ron said after a moment and turned red as well.

“You fell asleep?” Harry asked them with a wicked grin.

They didn’t reply both of them looked down on the floor. Harry knew he shouldn’t enjoy their discomfort and tease them, but he couldn’t help it, not after what had happened that day.

“Got a bit crowded in your room?” Harry asked Hermione, she didn't reply.

“One would think of course that it would be even more crowded to share a chair” He went on.

“One would also think that in a room with two beds and one chair, the chair would be the one thing not to sleep in, yet both of you seems to prefer it” Harry said working very hard not to start laughing.

“Or maybe...”

“Oh very funny Harry” Hermione snapped and Harry burst out laughing the fact that Hermione snapped at him made it ten times funnier.

“Stop laughing Harry” Hermione said.

“Can't” Harry managed to choke out “too... funny... should...see...your...faces” He was laughing painfully hard.

“Harry if you don't stop I'm going to pour water on you” Hermione said warningly.

“WATER” Harry practically yelled and laughed even more.

“SHUT UP” Ron shouted.

“Sorry” Harry said “Can't... stop...”

“He's gone mental” He heard Ron mutter to Hermione she seemed to agree.

“Harry please stop” She tried in a soft voice.

But Harry couldn't stop, no matter what they said. He laughed so badly that tears started rolling down his cheeks.

“Harry I'm serious, I'm going to pour water on you” Hermione said holding a pitcher full of water.

"You... better..." He managed to say, he couldn't stop it wasn't even funny anymore. And so she did, the water was freezing the pitcher must have had a temperature charm placed on it to keep its contents chilled. It helped; Harry was able to stop laughing.

"Sorry" He said as he wiped the worst of the water from his face
"couldn't stop"

"Are you all right?" Hermione asked.

"Sure it was just too much for a moment" Harry replied.

"So" Ron said nervously "Are you okay with me and Hermione?"

"What sleeping together?" Harry asked carelessly then as he saw Hermione's expression he realized what he'd said "Oh... didn't mean it that way. No, no problem wish you'd have told me though"

"Oh, Harry we would have told you but it just happened" Hermione said blushing scarlet.

They were silent for a moment Harry pulled off his wet shirt and put on a dry one.

"Got new clothes?" Hermione asked him looking at his neon green shirt.

"Yeah, Tonks bought me some" Harry said.

"I can see that" said Hermione she obviously didn't approve of Tonks dress sense.

"I know" Said Harry "Still better then Dudley's old"

"Yeah" Ron agreed "Did she get you anything orange?"

"No... most other colours though she thinks that with my black hair I need colourful clothes otherwise I will look boring"

"So Harry, had any visions?" Hermione asked him seriously.

"No, nothing, some pain but that's all" He answered truthfully he hadn't had any visions since he met Voldemort last time.

"Are you sure no strange dreams?" Hermione asked.

"Yes, I'm sure." He said he didn't like the subject, since Sirius died his nightmares seemed to be able to reach a new height of terror.

"So what have you been up to all day?" Ron asked him trying to change the subject to something more pleasant.

"Not much I've shown Fleur the house" He said in a lazy tone and there by hoping they would drop the subject. After his laughter, some of his tense feelings regarding Fleur seemed to have loosened.

"Oh, how is she doing, with her family and every thing?" Hermione asked him

"She was way worse this morning when I met her and Bill" Harry said he wasn't sure if Hermione and Ron knew about how they'd all met in Diagon Alley but none of them said anything so he guessed they knew.

"So, I guess you two haven't gotten any book lists yet?" Harry asked them

"No not yet, Dumbledore can't find a Defence against the Dark arts professor, he even asked Tonks and she lacks the ability to behave herself" Ron said with a smile.

"She didn't want the job then" Harry asked them.

"No, she said she would end up in Detention no matter how much professor she was" Ron said.

"It would be fun though" Harry said.

"Yeah, but we wouldn't learn much would we" Hermione said.

"Oh come off it Hermione she can't be worst then Umbridge, Quirrell or Lockhart" Ron said. Harry was very happy about this comment it

made things seem just as usual between them. After all, they were still the same people he thought.

"Well there are loads of aurors better suited as teachers than her Kingsley Shacklebolt for one" Hermione replied.

"He's too important at the ministry he can't just leave" Harry said.

"I'm not saying he isn't needed where he is, but you do realize that in two years we are going to take our NEWTs and we can't afford any more incompetent teachers" Hermione said in her bossy voice.

"You just got your OWLs back and now you worry about NEWTs?" Ron asked her incredulously. Harry wondered for a moment if Ron ever got tired of hearing Hermione tell him that their grades were very important, but then it struck him Ron must love to hear Hermione tell him grades were very important just as much as Hermione loved to tell Ron that grades were very important. They loved bickering with each other. Harry always thought they did it because they annoyed each other, but it was the other way around. He wondered briefly if they were aware of it themselves. He knew Ron probably wasn't he was a bit thick when it came to emotions and Hermione didn't really have self perspective enough to realise things like this.

"What are you smiling at" Hermione asked him.

"Oh, sorry just realized something" Harry said.

"What?" Hermione asked.

"You will know when you're older" Harry teased her he wasn't going to tell them anything this was the sort of thing they had to figure out for them self, if they already didn't know that is.

"Care to tell me then?" Ron asked his birthday was Mars 1 so he was older than Harry.

"Sorry mate can't tell you" Harry replied. "It's nothing important"

"What is it?" Hermione asked concernedly she obviously thought it might be related to his scar or she wouldn't be so persistent.

"Sorry can't tell you. You two have to figure it out for yourself. It's not a big deal just a silly detail" He said trying to make them forget about it.

"Oh, Harry mum got this friend who makes the most terrific Liquorice" Ron said "You just got to try it"

Hermione glared at Ron but didn't say anything. This can only mean one thing they 'Lying Liquorice' Harry thought. Ron ran over to his trunk and pulled out a small box in the size of a matchbox. He held it so that Harry couldn't see the text on the box, but Harry didn't need to.

"Thanks" he said and picked up a small black pastille, he decided to pretend to swallow it. Ron and Hermione looked closely at him.

"What? It's only Liquorice" As he said this they looked away from a moment long enough for him to pretend to put it in his mouth but to in fact keep it in his hand. He pretended to chew "Yeah it's rather good"

"So" Hermione said to Harry surprise, he thought Ron would be asking the questions. "You just gave Fleur a tour of the house?"

What! Harry thought. Did Hermione know something? What did he want her to believe? Well he didn't want them to know the truth not when it had gone so bad.

"No Remus did" Harry said and regretted it. That was a bad lie.

"Oh, I see" said Hermione "But I knew you spent some time with her, I think she is really shallow what do you think Harry"

How dare she say so about Fleur Harry thought bitterly he could feel his temper rising. Then he realized that he was blowing his cover and needed to say something.

"Harry?" Hermione asked him.

"Yeah sorry, what did you say?" He asked her to win some time

"I said I think Fleur is really shallow do you agree?" She asked him innocently.

Hermione had trapped him in a yes no question. He didn't have a way out of this... or had he. He was now becoming furious with Hermione, how could she accuse Fleur of being shallow? Hermione didn't even know her, and Fleur's family had just died. Hermione had no idea of what it was like not to have parents he was now shivering with anger.

"YOU STUPID IGNORANT BRAT" Harry yelled at her losing his temper completely. Hermione's expression changed from calculating coolness to horror-struck.

"She has just lost her family! Have you any idea what that is like! And you use lying liquorice to find out if I think she is shallow you stupid" Harry used an expression he never thought he would use on anyone much less Hermione.

Hermione started to cry she looked miserable; it gave Harry a grim sort of pleasure. "Too late to be sorry now isn't it?" He said in a cool and hard voice he didn't know he possessed but was quite proud of at the moment. Ron stood rooted to the spot.

"You know Hermione I shouldn't really be surprised anybody who get eleven Os is not sane" Harry said, it was not a fair accusation but he just wanted to hurt her and he knew that was a soft spot.

"I'm sorry" She said through her sobs that was now echoing in the room.

"I bet you are" Harry said "You know if I wasn't sure that your parents were nice people I would say HOPE YOU NEVER SEE THEM AGAIN" Harry took even himself by surprise by this statement and regretted it immediately.

"How can you say something like that" Ron said disbelievingly as he walked over to Hermione and held her.

She sobbed even more now into Ron's shoulder.

"I'M SORRY" She yelled "I'M A STUPID" she used a word he never thought Hermione would use.

"Yes you are" Harry agreed with her.

"I'm so sorry Harry, what do you want me to do, I'll do anything?" Hermione said so sadly and honestly that Harry almost felt sorry for her.

"I'm jealous at her the way Ron looks at her" She sobbed once more into Ron's shoulder.

"I told you I only did that to see if you cared?" Harry could hear Ron whisper into Hermione's ear Harry knew he was not supposed to hear that.

"I know Ron, but she is beautiful" Hermione sobbed.

"You were jealous of her?" Harry asked Hermione he didn't expect this.

"Yes, and I'm so sorry Harry, but I think she is using her influence on you" Hermione said pronouncing the words 'she' and 'her' very clearly.

Harry was speechless had Fleur only tricked him, was she a spy? Harry felt so stupid, of course why would she tell him she loves him they don't even know each other and Harry must have been so easy to convince.

"She told me she loved me" Harry admitted in a hollow voice.

"I'm sorry Harry did she... do anything?" Hermione asked him her tears slowly ebbing away.

"No, we just talked, she was sad because Bill was so nice too her and she loves him too" Harry said tonelessly.

Every one was silent. Hermione had stopped crying but Ron still held her and Harry was sitting down on his bed. Harry had never felt so miserable in all his life, he had been used, played like a brick by someone he loved someone he thought he were so close too. She'd used her veela charm on him; he didn't even suspect that he was being manipulated. He looked into his Foe Glass trying to spot her, but couldn't.

"Useless piece of crap" He growled at it.

"She's not in there" Hermione asked him wiping away her last tears.

"No" Harry said.

"Harry it's not certain she is a spy you know. I can't see how she could be really, Bill has spent a lot of time with her since Voldemort returned and he trusts her" Hermione said, Harry knew she was just saying that to cheer him up.

"Well he's a stupid male isn't he?" Harry asked her bitterly.

"He is a male but he isn't stupid. I can't see how any one could control him for a whole year with out him noticing anything" Hermione said.

"Yeah I don't think she could have controlled him that long" Said Ron. "Bill has had loads of pretty girlfriends during the years none of them has lasted a whole year"

"Harry, have you told anyone about this?" Hermione asked.

"I told Remus" Harry said. He now realised that Remus might have suspected that Fleur was tricking him. That would explain Remus's interest of details. How could he have been so stupid why would someone like Fleur like someone like him?

"Harry you'll have to go on as if you don't suspect her at all" Hermione said.

Harry nodded silently.

"Right let's get to bed" Hermione said and walked out of the room.

"Night" She said before she closed the door.

Ron and Harry didn't say much they just got ready for bed as quiet as possible, Harry was grateful for this. He felt so incredible stupid, he had been so naïve, but he also felt very, very sad he had for a few moments actually loved somebody. He felt slightly better as he remembered that they never even kissed. Maybe I somewhere knew she wasn't real he thought. What if he kissed her or worse, she could

have made him do anything. The emotional strain of the day caught up with him and he fell asleep before he even knew he was tired.

oooooooooooooooooooo

Next Chapter is called "Emotions" plain and simple. Hermione is a bit out of character perhaps but I figure she starts seeing herself as an adult and starts to follow adult rules, as she feels confident that her judgment is good enough. You'll see what I mean!

Oh yeah I almost forgot I will be posting another short fic with a really heavy R rating today it is not nice. Check it out if you feel like it!

Chapter 6 Emotions

"Morning Harry" Hermione's voice said.

"You are not supposed to be in here" Harry replied sleepily, he wondered how Hermione had managed to sneak into his dormitory with four other boys in without being detected. Then he remembered they had all gone home for the summer holidays. Once his mind had solved that problem it fell into dream state again.

"Harry wake up" He heard Hermione's voice again.

Oh yeah he remembered, she was in his dormitory "What are you doing here" he muttered.

"Wake Up!" She said again then she lowered her voice "we need to decide what to do with Fleur"

He hadn't heard what Hermione said he just heard the name Fleur. At once, that made him wide-awake and when the feelings of being used returned to his mind he wished more than ever that he hadn't woken up. Ron was already up he didn't even wear his pyjamas.

"We have been talking to Remus" Ron whispered.

"Harry Remus doesn't know you suspect a thing about Fleur..." Hermione said but were interrupted.

"Why not?" Harry asked her sadly. Every time he heard her name, he could feel his insides breaking.

"Honestly Harry if you are going to be an auror I suggest you read a couple on books on the subject" Hermione said.

"You read auror books" Ron asked her.

"Only one or two" She said "But that's beside the point Harry, Remus didn't need to know in fact he'll act better if he don't think you know anything"

"So what did he say" Harry asked them.

“He told us you were down drinking tea with him last evening and told him pretty much what you told us” Hermione said.

“Oh” Harry muttered he didn’t feel in the mood at all to get up so he pulled his covers over him and lay down.

“Harry you have to get up, its breakfast soon” Ron said.

“I’m not hungry” He replied shortly.

“Harry you have too” Hermione said Harry didn’t really know why but this was too much for him.

“No, I won’t” Harry snapped angrily through his bed covers.

“I’m sorry Harry but it is very important, Fleur...” Hermione said softly. This was too much for Harry.

“Unless Remus told you I loved her too, I feel” he cursed “miserable”

Harry turned his back at them and faced the wall but to no good he was too angry too sleep. Ron and Hermione didn’t say anything for a long moment.

“Harry I’m sorry but you really have too. Fleur might get suspicious otherwise and you really need to find out more about her” Hermione said softly, Harry ignored her.

“Do you need a drink?” Hermione asked him. Harry inhaled some saliva in surprise and started to cough.

“What’s the matter with you two?” She asked Ron had also started coughing violently.

“Hermione! Did you just suggest Harry drowns his troubles in the bottle” Ron asked hoarsely when he managed to stop coughing.

“No, I just said that maybe he needs something to numb his feelings a little” She replied.

“Numb his feelings?” Ron asked incredulously. To Harry it sounded great any thing that could make his feelings stop tearing his insides would be a blessing.

“Yes, Ron. Harry has to go down there and act as nothing. I think that some alcohol would be a good idea” Hermione said.

“Where are we going to get alcohol and won’t anyone notice if he’s been drinking” Ron asked incredulously.

“The alcohol is not a problem and no one will notice anything” Hermione said.

“Yeah well... if mum finds out” Ron said warningly.

“Don’t worry Ron, Harry will have to brush he’s teeth and then” she turned to Harry who had turned around and was facing them. Hermione continued “you can say you didn’t sleep well, you got loads of excuses all from nightmares to new place to sleep. Actually I don’t think she expects you to sleep too well your first night back in Black manor”

“Where do we get the alcohol?” Harry asked her.

“Well” Hermione said hesitantly looking nervously at Ron “Ginny and I bought some fire whiskey in the Hogshead”

“You did what?” Ron bellowed “but... but...Ginny is just a child!”

“She isn’t Ron she’ll be fifteen soon, and we haven’t been drunk” Hermione said calmly.

“Why didn’t you let me buy some?” Ron said angrily.

“Because at that moment that was a very bad idea” Hermione said “But I started to read up on alcohol and it’s really fascinating did you know that fire whiskey is the oldest...”

“So you got curious” Ron said angrily “Why couldn’t I be curious?”

“Harry?” Hermione asked ignoring Ron completely.

“Yes, I think I need some” He said.

“Good, I’ll be right back” Hermione said and exited the room. A few minutes later, she came back with a book and a bottle.

“Have you ever been drunk Harry?” She asked him not taking her eyes from the book.

“No” He replied.

“How would you describe your tolerance to potions and poisons, below average, average or above average” She asked him still not looking up from the book.

“I don’t know, average I suppose”

“How much do you weight?” She asked him.

“About 65 kg”

“When was the last time you ate?” She continued.

“Yesterday dinner” He told her.

“Right” Said Hermione and focused even harder on the book and after a few moments she put the book down.

“I think this will be enough” Hermione said pouring fire whiskey into a glass and handed it to Harry.

“Cheers” Harry muttered it was very strong and it burned his throat, though the taste of it wasn’t too bad. After a few moments, he had emptied the glass.

“How does it taste?” Ron asked him eagerly.

“Strong” Harry said in a forced whisper, he hadn’t realised that it had affected his voice this much.

“Hermione do you think I...” Ron asked.

“No you can’t” Hermione snapped at him.

“So I’m the only one here who isn’t allowed to drink?” Ron asked Hermione angrily.

“I’m not drinking either” Hermione said.

“You’ve already tasted it” Ron exclaimed.

“I didn’t taste it before breakfast” Hermione said calmly and with a tone that said that she didn’t want to discuss the matter any further.

“Right I’ll just have to buy a bottle for myself then” Ron said angrily.

“Don’t be stupid Ron, you can taste later” Hermione snapped at him.

They were quiet for a moment.

“Harry?” Hermione asked and Harry turned his head and faced her, he didn’t know if he imagined it, but when he turned his head it felt odd he couldn’t put his finger on it.

“Feel anything yet, magical alcohol works very fast” Hermione said.

“Maybe I don’t know” Harry answered.

They waited a few moments more.

“According to ‘A Beginners Guide to Magical Drinks’ you should be intoxicated by now” Hermione stated. It was true, there were no mistake in it he felt that all his senses had gone numb.

“Harry stand up” Hermione commanded him, Harry did as he was told.

“How do you feel” She said and looked in to his eyes and examined him.

“Better” He admitted.

“Can you act as if nothing?” Hermione asked him.

“I think so” Harry said, it all felt so strange he didn’t think anyone could tell any difference, but he didn’t really trust his own judgment.

“Good, I don’t think anyone will be able to tell anything as long as they don’t look too closely at you.” Hermione said.

“Hey, Harry can you walk in a strait line” Ron asked him happily.

“Of course he can” Hermione snapped she obviously didn’t think it was a good time for jokes. “Now get dressed and brush your teeth you smell like Mundungus”

Harry did as she said, he didn’t really feel any better, he realised he just didn’t care as much as he did before. When he was done brushing his teeth there was knock on their door.

“Wake up boys, breakfasts ready” Mrs Weasley’s motherly voice sounded through the door.

“Coming mum” Ron called.

“Ready, Harry?” Hermione asked him.

“Yeah” Harry replied.

“Okay, let’s wait for a moments so that Mrs Weasley have time to get back into the kitchen” Hermione said “I don’t think she would notice anything, but better safe then sorry”

They did they waited for about a minute before they opened the door and walked down to the kitchen. Mr Weasley had already left for work, but he was the only one not present everyone else was there even Bill and Ginny. Fleur was seated on one side of Bill and Ginny on the other. They must have made up Harry thought bitterly for a moment before he remembered that he hated Fleur. He sat down as far as possible from everyone else, Ron and Hermione sat down at each side of his. He didn’t look up from his toast, he ate in silence.

“Harry dear are you feeling all right?” Mrs Weasley’s voice asked.

Harry looked up at her and met her gaze; she looked for a moment confused.

"Harry have you done something?" She asked him suspiciously. Harry looked down on his toast.

"Oh no, got some bad dreams" He said quietly, could she tell that he had been drinking he wondered.

"Oh" She said after a short moment and returned to her eggs.

He continued to eat in silence. When they were done and stood up, Mrs Weasley asked Ron and Hermione to help her to clean up. Harry got up and made to help them.

"Harry why don't you go and lie down for a moment you look ill" Mrs Weasley said softly.

"Oh, right" Harry said and left the room he walked slowly back towards his and Ron's room.

"Harry, wait a moment" He heard Remus say behind him.

"What is it" Harry asked trying to compose his posture and look sober.

"Can I have a moment?" Remus asked. Harry didn't want Remus to see that he was drunk, but he couldn't come up with a good reason not to.

"Sure" He replied and opened the door to his room Remus followed him. Remus closed the door behind him and Harry sat down on his bed.

"What do you want" Harry asked rather rudely but he didn't care.

"Harry when I where in your age, James, Sirius, Peter and I spent a lot of time together. I knew your father very well. I remember once when he and Sirius got a month of detentions from McGonagall and lost a hundred house points each. I can still remember their faces" Remus said and smiled sadly.

"What did they do" Harry asked curiously.

“They turned up drunk for Transfigurations and hoped that she wouldn’t notice anything” Remus said and Harry felt his insides turn over. “It was always the risk that made it fun, and what could possibly be more dangerous than turning up for Transfigurations drunk”

“You know” Harry stated.

“Yes, Harry and I must tell you that, alcohol can sometimes be a good thing in fact even ingenious. However it’s not a suitable way to forget your sorrows” Remus said seriously.

“Can I have a memory charm then, please?” Harry asked; he didn’t care how he got over Fleur he just wanted the pain to go away.

“No, I’m sorry Harry but that is a big emotional thing, you can forget your memories but not your emotions and even if I could I wouldn’t” Remus explained.

“So alcohol isn’t that bad after all” Harry said angrily.

“Harry alcohol won’t make the pain go away, it’s not a solution” Remus said firmly. “Trust me Harry I tried it thoroughly when Peter and Siri...”

Harry didn’t say anything he undressed and went to bed “I hope I never wake up” He said.

“You’ll change your mind one day, Harry” Remus said and left the room, a few minutes later Harry was fast asleep.

He was back at the cemetery and tied to Tom Riddle the elder’s gravestone. He was very familiar with this place by now; he dreamed at least once a week that he was here though he never realised that he was dreaming. Fleur was standing in front of him she was laughing in a cold dead voice the voice of Lord Voldemort. Harry was crying he tried to get away to hide his tears from her he didn’t want Fleur to see how bad she had hurt him.

“Tears of the enemy forcibly taken” She said in gleeful French voice and she looked straight at him. Harry tried desperately to stop crying because if she manages to take tears from him something terrible

would happen but he couldn't stop. She laughed even more horrible and he cried even more.

"Oh, Harry you think you can stop crying? I have crushed your heart! You'll never stop crying, ever" Fleur said and laughed.

"And you know what the worst part is" Fleur asked him lowering her voice "You still have feelings for me, you still love me"

"NO" He yelled through his sobs.

She moved closer to him and bent down.

"Yes" She whispered in his ear. She held a vial under one of his eyes a few moments later when she pulled away from him he could see that the vial was full of his tears.

"How could you be so stupid Harry?" Fleur said looking at the vial. "To love a girl you don't know, to follow your foolish heart. Did you actually believe that I loved you? I didn't even have to kiss you"

"Stop it" Harry sobbed desperately.

"HARRY WAKE UP!" Hermione's voice yelled all of a sudden and the graveyard dissolved instead he saw Hermione's concerned face right above him.

"Harry, are you awake?" She asked him he nodded in reply

"You were scary mate" Ron's voice said "Wouldn't wake up and you were..." He trailed off as Hermione looked at him reprovingly. Harry figured out what Ron was about to say because he felt his wet pillow under him and realised that he must have been crying in his sleep. He didn't care much at the moment though, he was happy that he was awake.

"Did you have a vision Harry" Hermione asked him urgently.

Harry shook his head, he didn't think his voice could support him.

"Only a bad dream?" Hermione asked.

He nodded and as he did so he realised that he had tears on his cheeks and hurriedly wiped them off.

“Your scar didn’t hurt?” Ron asked.

“No” He whispered.

They were silent for a moment. Harry didn’t look at his best friends, he was too ashamed.

“What time is it?” Harry finally asked hoping to take attention away from him.

“About eleven thirty” Hermione said and he sighed, for how long was he going to feel like this, and for how long could he stand it.

“It’s not certain that she is a spy Harry” Hermione said.

“Not certain?” Harry snapped “Of course she is! She’s too good to be true!” It hurt badly to say this “What other girl would say that she loves me and not even kiss me”

“She didn’t even kiss you?” Ron asked.

“No, told you yesterday she didn’t do anything” Harry exclaimed angrily. Hermione looked puzzled.

“Harry what did you two talk about?” She asked him after a short moment.

“I gave her a tour” Harry said angrily.

“She didn’t ask anything?” Ron asked.

“No, she was mostly quiet. I thought that she was sad because of her family” Harry said still very angrily “Can we just drop this”

No one said anything for several minutes.

“Mrs Weasley expects me and Ron to help her with lunch” Hermione told him “Will you be okay by yourself?”

“Yeah” Harry said.

“We’ll come and get you for lunch then” Ron said as they walked out the door.

Harry felt a little bit better then when he just had woken up, he got up from his bed and walked around in the room. He was trying to push the thoughts of Fleur away from his mind. There was a tap on the window at the far end of the room. He walked over to the window and saw Hedwig outside. His heart leapt, he hurriedly opened the window and extended his arm for Hedwig to sit on.

“Hello Hedwig, I’ve missed you” He said and patted her. He was in a strange mood and felt a huge need of caring for Hedwig. He found some feathers that stuck out in a way she didn’t like and striated them for her. She hooted happily.

“Been out hunting have you?” He asked her.

Hedwig hooted a ‘Yes’.

“I’ve been pretty sad Hedwig” He confessed and felt tears filling up in his eyes.

“What do I do?” He said and sighed she hooted sadly in response.

“Do you think Tonks will take me back to Privet drive if I ask her? It could be worth a try wouldn’t it? I guess I could ask Remus or Mrs Weasley but I don’t think I could, you know what I mean?” He told his owl as if he hoped that she could understand him.

“Are you feeling up to a letter?” He asked her she hooted another ‘Yes’.

“Good hold on a moment” he said and put her down in her cage.

He found some parchment and a quill in the desk that stood in the room and sat down in the chair Ron and Hermione had slept in.⁷

Dear Tonks

How are you doing? Hope that you aren't too busy. I'm writing to ask you if there is any chance that you can take me back. No I am not joking, things are terrible here and I don't know how much more I can stand. Please answer soon.

Harry

He put the letter in an envelope and sealed it. He hoped that she would be able to reply soon.

"Here you go Hedwig, It's for Tonks okay?" He said as he tied the letter to her leg.

There was a quick knock on the door and it swung open Ron entered.

"Ready Harry?" Ron asked him.

"Yeah, I'll be down in a minute you go ahead" Harry said there was now way what so ever that he was attending lunch. He had to figure out a way to skive off. That's it some 'nose bleed nougat' should do the trick he thought and rummaged around in his trunk until he found his 'skiving snack box'. There were loads of different illnesses he could use but he had already settled for the 'nose bleed nougat'. He read the instructions carefully the red part will make you bleed and the yellow will stop it he found out after a moment of reading. He decided to walk down to the kitchen and take it just before he entered. He slipped out of the room and down the stairs and soon he was standing outside the kitchen door. Right he thought this is it. He took a deep breath and put the red part of the nosebleed nougat in his mouth, it tasted fairly well considering what it was. He swung the door open and swallowed.

"Hello Harry your just in time" Mrs Weasley said. He looked around in the room everyone was there and looking at him. He caught Fleur's eyes she made a really good job pretending she had some feelings for him.

"Harry you're bleeding" Ginny shrieked and sure enough Harry was bleeding heavily from his nose.

"Oh, Sorry" He muttered. Mrs Weasley conjured a towel for him and walked him up to his room.

"Sit here on your bed" She commanded and pushed him down. "Now lean forward slightly and pinch it" Harry did as she said. Mrs Weasley smiled and said "That's it Harry dear will you be alright by yourself?"

"Yeah" Harry replied.

"Good, now don't move around even if it stops. I'll have Ron to bring your food later" She said and exited the room.

Harry quickly found the yellow piece of the nose bleed nougat and swallowed it. His nose stopped bleeding that very instant. He knew that if he would just sit there his thoughts would fall back on Fleur. He had to do something, he thought for a moment of his homework but he had already finished all of it the two first weeks of the holiday. He glanced for a moment on his Foe Glass, nothing but distant black figures. As he watched the black figures moving slowly around in the back of the foe glass he remembered his birthday, everything had been so good that day. He had been so proud when he got 'Dueling for Masters' from all the DA. That was it he thought he had not read a word in 'Dueling for Masters' that would surly occupy his thoughts. He rummaged around in his trunk for a moment before he found it.

Harry again noticed how very expensive it looked. The cover material seemed to be of dragon scale, probably from a Horntail because of the black colour. He opened the book and saw the inscription from the DA again it made him smile. On the second page where a table of contents and on the page after that a short introduction to the book. The book was divided in three sections Defensive and offensive dueling and finally battle. As Harry read, he saw to his horror that he could learn the unforgivables from this book. He looked up Avada Kedavra to make sure he hadn't misunderstood, but he hadn't. It was macabre to see a large colour picture featuring two wizards demonstrating the curse. There were tips on how to perform the curse as if it was a cheering charm, what kind of wand motion that was preferable, how you could tell if the curse was successful and that it was unblockable. To his relief the book didn't mention him but then he found out why the book was written 1979 by Edgar Bones.

Not a good sign Harry thought bitterly if the author of the book was killed in a duel. He thought for a moment more and realized that it wasn't strange at all that the book covered the unforgivables they were perfectly legal for aurors to use at the time the book was written.

There was a knock on the door and Ron and Hermione entered. Hermione was carrying a tray with Harry's lunch on.

"You didn't tell us you got nose bleed nougat" Ron said when he'd closed the door.

"Got it for my birth day" Harry said to Ron then he turned to Hermione "You do realise you have given me a book that teaches the unforgivables"

Ron looked horror-struck but Hermione's expression didn't change.

"So?" She said as she put his tray with food down on the desk.

"What you mean so?" Ron asked her.

"It's not that unusual, they were legal for almost five years you know" Hermione stated calmly.

"You mean you read about them in several books?" Ron asked utterly bewildered.

"You just have to enter the library in Diagon Alley and look for advanced Defence against the dark art books that was printed around 1980" Hermione said as if this was the plainest thing in the world.

"Hermione you are a bit scary sometimes" Ron told her.

"Why?" She said her voice rising slightly.

"Knowing how to perform the unforgivables is scary" Ron answered firmly.

"So I should just close my eyes and pretend they don't exist" Hermione said her temper visibly rising.

"Yes" Ron said forcefully.

“Harry” Hermione said in a deadly calm voice “Do you also find me scary for not closing my eyes for the unforgivables”

Harry agreed with Ron sometimes Hermione’s extreme knowledge of everything was a bit scary. He didn’t dare to tell her so and besides had he just not read about the killing curse and a couple of weeks ago had he not actually performed the cruciatus curse.

“No” Harry said looking down he regretted that he used the cruciatus curse very much.

“See” Said Hermione gleefully to Ron. Harry expected Ron to reply but when he didn’t Harry looked up at him. Ron looked at Hermione with the same expression he had in ‘Quality Quidditch Supplies’. Harry understood that Ron had a very strong urge to kiss Hermione but that he held it back because of Harry. He noticed that Hermione was returning Ron’s expression.

“I’ll go and feed Buckbeak” He muttered and got up from his bed still holding the book, got his tray with food from the desk and made for the door.

“Oh all right” Hermione said and begun to follow him.

“No it’s all right I would like to be alone” He lied, and left. When the door behind him closed, he sighted deeply. They would always be his best friends but this made everything so much harder for him at least at the moment. He walked slowly up the final stair to the top floor and down a corridor to Buckbeak’s room. He opened the door with much trouble since he was carrying a tray full of food and a huge book. Buckbeak looked at him expectantly with his orange eyes

“Don’t know if you like this but why don’t you help yourself” Harry said placing the tray in front of the hippogriff, Harry wasn’t hungry at all. The thought of food made him feel ill, however, he saved the glass of pumpkin juice for himself. Harry watched Buckbeak eat for a moment before he sat down at the huge desk that stood in a corner of the room. He opened the book and begun to read the first part of the book Defensive Dueling. The first chapter was about not being hit to begin with, to dodge curses by getting out of the way. Harry found it surprising that the author could find so much interesting to write about

jumping out of the way, Edgar Bones clearly was a very good writer. Even though the book was mainly written for people who had passed their NEWTs, Harry understood most of it. The second chapter was even more interesting it was about how you use magic to help you get out of the way. It covered agility charms, which if performed correctly let you boost your reflex several times the normal. Harry imagined how it would be like to fly on his Firebolt with reflexes several times more agile than usual. After that, he read about different ways of hiding, the book covered everything from creating an image of yourself to lure your opponent to attack it instead to become completely invisible.

‘Though not many wizards manage to become completely invisible without a cloak’ Harry read ‘it is a rare ability. One of the few of our time that knows the art of invisibility is none other than Albus Dumbledore’

The following chapter were about animagi. It didn’t go into any greater detail about the transformation process it focused on the dueling and jump out of the way part.

There was a knock on the door and it swung open, Ron stood there.

“Still here Harry?” Ron asked when he saw him.

“Yeah been reading” Harry said gesturing towards the book.

“Harry” Ron said seriously, too seriously Harry was sure Ron was about to joke. “I forbid you to see Hermione. She has a very bad influence on you”

Harry smiled “Who’s talking about influence” he teased.

Ron blushed and said “Thanks for feeding Buckbeak”

“No problem” Harry replied moderately surprised that Ron knew that he left them on purpose.

“So you are looking for me?” Harry asked.

“Yeah, dinner is ready” Ron said.

Harry didn't reply he couldn't face Fleur and much less eat dinner with her at the same table.

"Listen mate, I brought some Fever Fudge from your snack box" Ron said when Harry didn't reply.

"You better turn up down there and go 'Oh, I feel so hot' mum will send you to bed faster then Snape take house points" Ron said.

"No one is that fast" Harry joked. He was very happy to have Ron as a friend. Ron knew exactly how to cheer him up.

"You'll be surprised" Said Ron with a smile "You better bring that lunch tray too. Mum will have a fit if she finds out that you didn't eat it"

"Right" Harry said and got up from the chair he felt that his back didn't like the way he had been sitting. "How does Hermione do it" Harry asked as he stretched his back painfully.

"No idea" Ron stated.

"You know what? I'll carry the tray you just focus on your fever" Ron said and handed him the fever fudge.

"Red side first" Ron said and picked up Harry's tray "Better eat it at once it'll take a minute to affect you"

"Thanks" He replied and ate the red part it too tasted surprisingly good considering what it did.

They left the room and walked all the stairs down to the kitchen. By now, Harry really felt sick he could tell he had a high fever.

"Ready" Ron asked him a moment before he opened the kitchen door. He was the last one to enter everyone else was already seated he only just noticed Fleur before he looked down on the floor.

"Hello dears" Mrs Weasley exclaimed when they entered. But then when she looked a bit closer at Harry she added "Harry you're looking ill"

"Yeah I feel a little hot" He said innocently, a little hot was the understatement of the decade.

Mrs Weasley practically ran over to him and put her hand on his forehead "You have a fever!" She said accusingly. She put her arm around him and pulled him all the way to his bed.

"Don't worry Harry dear it's probably just a nasty cold judging by your nose bleeds. Charley always have nose bleeds when he is ill"

Harry pulled the covers over him he was freezing.

"Do you need anything? A pain reducing potion?" She asked him gently.

"No" He said quickly hoping not to worry her too much.

"You have to drink anyway" She said "I'll send Ron with something"

"Thanks" Harry said and Mrs Weasley walked out of the room.

Harry quickly swallowed the Blue part of the Fever fudge. It was wonderful he felt a freezing sensation spreading through his body and the fever was gone almost immediately. He felt guilty about tricking Mrs Weasley that he was ill, but it couldn't be helped.

He picked up his book and continued to read. He read about different shielding charms from curse deflection to physical damage reduction to Flame freezing charms. This was a very long chapter and he had only read about one tenth of it when Ron entered the room.

"Told you she was faster then Snape" Ron said.

"Yeah, yeah whatever" Harry said.

"Brought you some food" Ron said as he placed a tray on his bed.

"Thanks"

"Reading again?" Ron asked him.

"Yeah" Harry said.

"I'll have to talk about this with the twins maybe they can help you" Ron said as if Harry was dying of an incurable illness.

Harry smiled "They won't do any good they are series businessmen now remember?"

"I didn't think it would come to this point Harry but I may have to relive you from your misery" Ron joked.

"Do you think that's necessary?" Harry asked as if they were talking about a nasty medicine.

"Yes, I'm afraid it is Harry" Ron said seriously in a perfect doctor imitation "Normally in cases such as yours, we recommend the imperius curse but you seem to have developed an immunity against it..."

"Right" Harry said gloomily, as if he knew that it was all for his own good.

"I'll send for Nurse Granger, to have you ex..." Ron said but got interrupted by Harry

"Do you think Fleur is under the Imperius Curse" Harry said urgently. Maybe Fleur wasn't really evil after all, maybe she was being used too. Harry's heart rate doubled in an instant, he hoped so badly that this was the case.

"Maybe" Ron said "Let's ask Hermione"

"Yeah where is she?" Harry asked him.

"Helping mum, she doesn't really approve of you skiving off" Ron replied "Says it will be very hard to find out anything about Fleur without you"

Harry couldn't believe how insensitive Hermione was, he had expected her rather than Ron to understand his feelings.

"Let's look it up in your book" Ron said as he saw Harry's furious expression.

“Yeah” Harry agreed and flipped to the index.

“Impedimenta... Imperius Offensive spell Page 643, 150, 1067, 872” He read aloud and tapped ‘643’ with his wand. It was rather common that more expensive books had searching charms in them he hoped that this book was one of those. Sure enough, the number ‘643’ glow bright gold for a moment and then the pages started to flip as if a strong wind blew them over. They stopped flipping a few moments later and Harry could see the page number on the current page glowing slightly it was page ‘643’.

“How expensive was this book anyway” Harry asked Ron.

“Don’t know, quite expensive, every one was really generous especially the OWL takers they all felt that they had done great on the exams. And I guess that it was proven that you-know-who was back helped too.” Ron said thoughtfully.

“Hope not all of them expect birthday gifts now” Harry joked.

“No, we got you that book as payback” Ron said and then added jokingly “But you better get me a nice present”

“Right” Said Harry smiling slightly, he looked down from Ron into the book. Mostly the book described how to cast the curse; it also suggested that you train to overcome it since there is no way of blocking it magically. ‘Se page 150 for further details about throwing off the imperius curse’ he read at the end of the page.

“Not much here” Harry said “Only the dueling part”

“Look at the other pages” Ron suggested.

“Yeah all right” Harry said and flicked over to page 872. The chapter was called ‘Recognize your friends and foes in battle’ and at the top of the page it said ‘Recognizing the imperius curse’

“This is it” Harry said triumphantly. He had for a moment thought that the book couldn’t help him.

“The imperius curse is one of the most feared and most useful curses in battle. Often the winning side is decided by how many warlocks that can withstand the imperius curse. Commonly the imperius curse is used rather than the killing curse in battle since it is more useful. The caster usually commands the subject to recast the curse on his friends and give them the same objectives, there by starting a chain effect. Huge battles have been lost and won by the imperius curse especially when it was newly created. The fall of Egypt is perhaps the most widely known tragedy of the imperius curse.” Harry read aloud. “It is hard to recognize the imperius curse, especially in battle before it is too late. However it is not impossible the most common way of discovering it is by recasting the curse on the subject and command them to throw it off, this is a foolproof way. If you are unable to perform the imperius, you can if you know the subject in question often recognize differences in their behaviour. Victims of the imperius curse tend to lose focus on the present as they try to fight it. The stronger the subject in question is the longer they tend to ‘drift off’. If this happens, look the subject in his or hers eyes and check if they are focusing on anything if not try to determine if they move their eyes. Subjects of the imperius curse tend to move their eyes rapidly followed by periods of stillness. A final way of determining the imperius curse is to perform the True Soul Charm (see page 417) which is most commonly used to detect if a person is being possessed (see page 574 for how to posses people). This is a very complex charm as it involves soul reading and should not be performed by anyone except by healers as the subject leaps a great risk of going mad or worse”

They sat in silence for a moment.

“That’s it” Ron asked “We can’t find out unless perform the imperius curse?”

“Unless I manage to see her fight it” Harry said sadly. He might have a chance to see Fleur fight the imperius if he spends time with her.

The door handle squeaked slightly and the door opened. Hermione entered the room.

“Hello Darling” Harry called to Hermione. He felt a sudden need to be nasty.

“Cut it out Harry” Ron said angrily.

Hermione blushed slightly.

“We have been reading about the imperius curse” Ron informed her
“We think that Fleur might be controlled”

“Yes why do you think I said that Harry needs to spend time with her”
Hermione replied.

“You could have told us” Harry said crossly.

“I thought it was obvious” Hermione said irritably.

“You should have told us anyway” Harry said accusingly in a loud voice, it would have saved him a lot of heartache if she had.

“Why so you can call me a know it all again that got eleven Os? You even told me that any one who gets eleven Os can’t be sane”
Hermione replied tears filling up in her eyes.

“Sorry” Harry muttered he had forgotten that he had yelled at her the previous night and figured that he had more things to apologize for
“I’m sorry about what I said about your parents too”

She smiled sadly at him “I’m sorry I used Lying Liquorice on you”

“You already said that” Harry replied hoping to raise the mood.

Ron’s eyes grew wide “Why don’t we use it on her” He exclaimed.

“On Fleur?” Harry asked.

“It’s no good Ron” Hermione said “It’s too risky, we would blow our cover and there is no guarantee that we get any answers from her and if she is under the imperius I don’t think it would work at all. Besides Bill is leaving first thing tomorrow so you’ll have a clear field”

Harry agreed with her but didn't say so; any other way then to spend time with Fleur would be a good way to find out about any eventual imperius curse. However, if he had to spend time with Fleur it would be nice if Bill left the house.

"How can we be sure that she doesn't do anything?" Asked Ron "I mean it might be dangerous"

"Yeah" Agreed Harry quickly he wasn't really scared of Fleur but he was going to take every reason out of this.

"Don't be silly Harry, she'd had several chances on killing you already besides we will be watching you" Hermione said calmly "and Remus knows, he won't let anything happen"

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Thanks for all the wonderful reviews; next chapter is called "Another Sorrow"!

Chapter 7 Another Sorrow

At that moment Hedwig came flying through the open window he'd never closed it once Hedwig had left for Tonks, but at a second glance Harry saw that she wasn't flying she was crashing. Hedwig hit the floor with a sickening thud.

"HEDWIG" Harry yelled and ran over to her, his heart was beating so fast and hard that it he was almost vibrating. He bent down to pick her up but stopped himself in mid motion her left wing was bent in a very odd angle and he didn't dare to move her he might hurt her even more. He looked into Hedwig's amber eyes he could see that she was in extreme pain. He had to pick her up and get her to Mrs Weasley. He put his hands around her and carefully lifted her off the floor. She closed her amber eyes as the pain intensified. He looked around at Ron and Hermione. Ron looked very worried and Hermione down right scared.

"Open the door for me" He hissed at them, he didn't want to yell because of Hedwig. Hedwig never liked when people yelled. Ron ran over and opened the door.

"Where's Mrs Weasley" He asked them.

"She's in the drawing room" Ron said at once "I think... placing dust repelling charm"

Harry ran down the stairs and into the drawing room. Mr and Mrs Weasley were standing with their wands drawn and waving them at various objects.

"Mrs Weasley" Harry said urgently.

"Harry" She said and turned to him "Are you... oh" she trailed off as she saw Hedwig.

"What happened Harry" Mr Weasley asked seriously.

"I don't know she just flew in to the room and crashed on the floor" Harry said very fast "I think she has a broken wing, she's in pain"

He looked down at her in his hands her eyes where still closed in a painful expression. Mrs Weasley had run up and now stood beside him.

"We need to help her!" Mrs Weasley said urgently and walked towards the door, Harry, Mr Weasley, Ron and Hermione followed her.

"Harry" Mr Weasley asked him as they were walking after Mrs Weasley "From where were Hedwig arriving?"

"Ministry of magic, if that is were Tonks reads her post" Harry said hastily.

"Oh" Mr Weasley replied as if he understood something and sighted heavily.

"Harry" Hermione's voice said from behind him in a whisper "Is Hedwig all right?"

"Of course not" Harry snapped at her and looked down at Hedwig. She must be in so much pain Harry thought.

"Don't worry Hedwig it'll be all right" He whispered to her. Mrs Weasley turned down a corridor, walked over to a door, and opened it. Harry had never been in this room before. It was a nice little room with a small bed in one corner a child's bed.

"Put Hedwig on the bed" Mrs Weasley said and flicked her wand and said some incantations. The Bed in the corner of the room flew over to the middle of the room and the bed legs grew so that it looked more like a table then a bed. Harry carefully put Hedwig down on the bed. She must be in so much pain Harry thought again she was all rigid and she didn't open her eyes.

Mrs Weasley looked up at him with a sad expression but didn't do anything.

"Do something" He hissed at Mrs Weasley, he didn't want to startle Hedwig by yelling full out.

He looked around at the rest of them they were all watching him sadly "What!" he snapped as loud as he dared. No one said anything. "Give her some pain reducing potion!" Harry told Mrs Weasley.

"Oh, Harry" Said Hermione softly with tears in her eyes "Hedwig isn't in any pain"

"How can you say that she has broken her wing of course she is in pain" He replied angrily.

"Harry" Mrs Weasley said also very softly also with tears in her eyes "could you check Hedwig's pulse?"

"Yeah" Harry said glad that someone said something that made sense. He bent down to Hedwig and carefully put his hand over her chest. She was such a little bird Harry thought. She looked much bigger then she actually was due to all her feathers. She had so much feathers he couldn't even feel her pulse through them, he started to whirl his fingers down in her plumage, she hated when people did that but it couldn't be helped.

"Hang on a moment" Harry said to Mrs Weasley "She has so many feathers"

He still couldn't feel any pulse, odd he thought maybe he could feel it easier if on her neck. He moved his hand over to Hedwig's neck but he didn't feel anything. He usually could feel her quick beating bird heart by just stroking her, not to mention her breathing.

"Harry... she's dead" Whispered Hermione's voice from beside him.

"Who" Harry asked, what was Hermione on about he wondered.

"Harry Hedwig is dead" She said softly tears were now rolling down her cheeks.

"Stop it Hermione it isn't funny" Harry said angrily. Why would Hermione say such a stupid thing why was every body behaving so stupidly?

“Harry, Hedwig doesn’t breath and her heart isn’t beating” Ron said as firmly as he could though his voice was shaking.

Harry blinked, he didn’t understand. What were they on about, he tried to remember what Ron had said but he couldn’t make any sense of it.

“What” He asked Ron uncertainly.

“Harry, your owl has been murdered” Mr Weasley said gravely.

“What do you mean?” Harry asked him.

“For heavens sake Harry! HEDWIG IS DEAD!” Hermione yelled at him and started to sob in her hands.

“Hedwig is dead?” He echoed. He tried to understand what they all meant but he just couldn’t he knew that they were telling him horrible things so horrible that Hermione was crying.

“Look! We got to give her some pain reducing potion” Harry said trying to talk some sense into them.

“SHE ISN’T IN PAIN! IT IS TOO LATE! SHE’S DEAD!” Hermione yelled crying even more.

Harry looked down on Hedwig, Hermione had told him that it was too late for pain reducing potions, but it can’t be it would only be to late if she is dead and Hedwig isn’t dead she can’t be.

Mrs Weasley had walked around the bed and hugged Harry firmly “I’m sorry Harry” She said. Harry’s mind was working furiously why would Mrs Weasley say she was sorry Harry wondered and why was Hermione sobbing. They were all behaving as if someone was dead Harry thought. He tried to remember what they had told him, he could definitely remember them using the word ‘dead’. Someone’s dead he wondered for a moment but then his eyes fell on Hedwig. He had to help her. Right Mrs Weasley had asked him to take her pulse, but he couldn’t find it. Now why can that be he thought for a moment, her heart must have stopped beating he realized and if your heart stops

beating, you are dead! He broke lose from Mrs Weasley's hug and bent down to Hedwig trying desperately to feel her pulse.

"She hasn't got a pulse" He yelled at them he could feel tears rolling down his cheeks.

"She hasn't got a pulse" He repeated in disbelief.

"Wake up" He yelled at his dead owl. He tried desperately to make her respond, he even tried to make her stand up but as soon as he let go she fell stiffly back onto the bed.

"No" He whispered. He realized suddenly how they had tried to tell him that Hedwig was dead. He started to cry aloud. He had to get out of there he couldn't stand another second of it he had to run. He left the room and begun to run up the stairs towards his room he got half way up before he realized that someone was already in the stairs on their way down. It was Fleur. Harry almost fell down the stairs from pure shock but managed to catch the railing. Harry didn't know what to do he just stared at her.

"What happened, Harry?" Fleur asked him concernedly. Harry's feelings were torn shattered burned and frozen he just knew that he wanted to be with Fleur no matter what his mind had to say about it.

He took a step towards her, threw his arms around her and sobbed uncontrollably into her shoulder. For a long moment, he just cried while Fleur patted his back and whispered with her French accent "it will be okay" over and over again. When he managed to control his sobs a little, Fleur pulled him away from the stairs and up to Buckbeak's room. Buckbeak looked at them expectantly but when he couldn't smell any food he went back to his usual hobby, pruning his feathers.

"What happened?" Fleur asked him.

"It's Hedwig" Harry said he was still crying but not so much that it prevented him from speaking "She's dead too"

"Oh, Harry I'm so sorry" Fleur said and she truly looked it. "Where you close to Hedwig?"

"She was my first real friend" He replied and begun to sob again he couldn't help it he found the fact that Hedwig 'was' his friend very sad. She would never again drop down for a piece of his bacon and a quick hello before going to sleep in the owlery, never again bring him a letter and never again keep him company on privet drive.

They walked over to the bed and sat down. Fleur held him so closely that Harry could feel her heartbeat it was very comforting. After a few moments, Fleur begun to cry too, Harry held her tightly. They cried without speaking for hours. Harry must have fallen asleep at some point because the following morning he awoke by a knock on the door. He tried to sit up but as he did so, he realised that Fleur was sleeping on his chest. She opened her deep blue eyes and her pupils contracted as she focused on his eyes.

"Fleur" He mumbled her eyes were red from crying and he guessed that his eyes were to. There was another sharp knock on the door and they both sat up.

"Come in" Harry said and Hermione entered the room. She glared at Fleur but managed to drag her eyes of her and onto Harry instead.

"All right Harry?" Hermione asked nervously.

"Never better" He said sarcastically he couldn't help it he didn't want Hermione to glare that way at Fleur.

"I just wanted to tell you that there it's breakfast. You don't have to come down I can bring you something" She offered.

"Could you bring us toast and something to drink" Harry asked.

Hermione hesitated for a moment as she looked at Fleur then she looked back at Harry "Yeah sure" She said and left the room.

Fleur sighted "Another great thing about being a veela"

"What?" Harry asked her.

"I haven't had a single friend since I started school" Fleur said sadly.

"What do you mean you're nice and funny and caring" Harry said incredulously "You can't have any problems making friends"

"You would be surprised" Fleur replied grimly.

"Are you serious?" Harry asked.

"Yeah, most girls hate me" Fleur said.

"Why" Harry asked her utterly bewildered.

"Oh come on Harry, haven't you seen the way Hermione and Ginny glares at me?" Fleur asked him.

"I suppose, are all girls like that?" Harry asked her.

"Yes" She said heavily.

Harry knew that Hermione and Ginny were very nice girls, normally, and if they glared at Fleur, most girls probably would.

"I'm sorry" Harry said "How do you manage it?"

"I told you aunt Nancy helped me allot, I practically spent every afternoon in her office" She replied.

They sat in silence for a moment.

Harry sighed "Why is it so hard?" He asked her.

Fleur sighed too "It just is" She replied and then added "But it's nothing personal and you do have the choice to end it... Harry have you ever considered... you know... it can be made painless you just go to sleep and it will never hurt again"

"Yes" Harry said flatly "But never really seriously, most of the time I just wish I had died with mum"

They sat in silence again. Harry suddenly remembered that Fleur might very well be a spy, his thoughts panicked for a moment but then he decided that he would rather be happy with Fleur for now and take the consequences later on. In fact, he didn't really care if Fleur

killed him in a few days if he could be happy with her until then. It was a horrible prospect but it was the way it had to be, Harry was beaten he didn't have the will to fight anymore he just wanted the pain to go away no matter what, even if it meant to close his eyes for reality.

"I Love you Fleur" He whispered to her tears filling up in his eyes.

"I love you too Harry" She replied. Harry's tears rolled out of his eyes and down his cheeks. This was all he asked for, even if it probably was a lie but Harry couldn't be sure and the thought warmed his heart.

They held each other tightly. Harry could feel Fleur's heartbeat again. It was a very comforting and a very powerful feeling.

There was a knock on the door. This time Harry got up from the bed and opened it. Hermione was standing outside with a tray full of toasts, bacon, egg two glasses and a pitcher full of pumpkin juice.

"Thanks" Harry said happily, he felt much better since his decision to give in to Fleur.

"Harry can I have a word with you?" Hermione asked him when he was about to close the door.

"Sure I'm just going to put this down" He said gesturing at the tray, he went into the room a gain and put the tray down on the desk.

"Hermione wants a word" He informed Fleur. Fleur rolled her eyes and Harry smiled at her "Don't worry I'll be back"

"What is it Hermione?" He asked her when he had closed the door. Hermione didn't reply she pulled him away from the door and in to an empty room which belonged to Tonks.

"What" He asked her.

"Harry has she done something?" Hermione asked seriously.

"Like what?" Harry asked.

“Like the thing boys and girls do when they spend the night together” Hermione said blushing badly. She didn’t blush half as bad as Harry did however.

“No” He replied.

”Nothing at all?” She asked him suspiciously.

“No” Harry said firmly.

“Then why did you spend the night together?” She asked him curiously.

“I’ve given up” Harry confessed.

“Given up?” Echoed Hermione as if she didn’t really understand.

“I don’t care if she is lying to me I’m happy with her and I love her. And if she kills me later on I will at least be happy before I die” Harry said and walked out of the room before Hermione could stop him he ran all the way back to Buckbeak’s room. He smiled to himself vaguely as he entered he wished he could see Ron’s face when Hermione told him the news, Ron was very good at making funny faces. He knew he should feel very guilty about upsetting and deserting his friends like this but at the moment he couldn’t care less.

Fleur was sitting at the end of the bed feeding Buckbeak bacon from the tray.

“I’m an evil veela that lures innocent boys into bed?” Fleur asked him with a smile.

“Yeah something like that. I shut her up pretty well though” Harry said.

“What did you say” Fleur asked.

“Told her that I didn’t even care if you killed me because I would die happy” He said truthfully.

He sat down next to her and started eating a buttered toast, he was hungry in a way that he hadn't been for days and the food tasted great.

"So what do you want to do today?" Harry asked her.

"I don't know... we could play something" Fleur said childishly.

"Sounds good" Harry replied he liked the childish tone in Fleur's voice.

"Yeah, so what kind of games do you play?" She asked him as she poured herself another glass of pumpkin juice.

"Well Quidditch is out of the question, and since it's just the two of us all I can think of is chess and exploding snap" He replied.

"Oh" Fleur said slightly disappointed.

"Or we can eat Lying Liquorice and tell horrible lies" Harry said before he could stop himself. He had no intention in using it to force information out of Fleur. In fact, he wasn't going to ask her even if the chance turned up he didn't want to know he was much happier unknowingly.

"Lying Liquorice?" Fleur asked him.

"Yeah it forces you to tell lies, never tried it though" Harry said in a rather strained voice.

"You think it works?"

Harry nodded.

"Okay but you'll go first" She told him and smiled.

"Fair enough" He said as he finished his toast "Are you done?"

"Uh-huh" She replied and got up from the bed.

"Right" Harry said and got up as well he gave the rest of the eggs and bacon to Buckbeak.

They walked out of the room and down the stairs when they passed their rooms Fleur stopped.

“Harry I think I need to freshen up a bit first, lets meet down in the drawing room in half an hour?” She asked him, a part of Harry’s brain told him that she might take precautions against various truth telling potions in that half hour but Harry ignored that part.

“Yeah all right 30 minutes then” He said.

Fleur ran off towards the bathroom and Harry was left alone in the corridor. He didn’t have much choice then to enter his room.

As he entered Ron was sitting on the chair in which he’d fallen asleep in Hermione was sitting in his lap, they were kissing. Harry closed the door a little harder the necessary to break them up. Hermione gave a shriek and turned so quickly to look at Harry that Ron slithered halfway off the chair, which in turn caused Hermione to lose her balance and fall forward on Ron. Ron who had already almost fallen off the chair fell to the floor with a crash Hermione landed on top of him and the chair tangled up in their legs.

“What’s with that chair” Harry asked them. They didn’t reply the slowly untangled them self from each other and the chair and stood up both blushing furiously.

“I must warn you” Harry said seriously “That is an old chair you will break it one day”

“Oh, Shut up Harry” Ron said irritably “You can’t talk you spent the night with Fleur”

“So what” Harry challenged.

“At least Hermione cares for me” Ron said angrily.

“As far as I know Fleur loves me” Harry replied stubbornly.

“What has she done to you Harry?” Hermione asked him concernedly.

“Nothing” He replied “We haven’t even kissed but I don’t care I’m happy with her”

“Why would you spend the night together if you don’t even kiss?” Ron asked him curiously.

This made his temper flare “Crying mostly” he snapped.

Ron didn’t reply and neither did Hermione. Harry walked over to his trunk and got his box of Lying Liquorice he had his back turned to Ron and Hermione so he doubted they could see what he was looking for. He got up and walked towards the door.

“Will you tell us Harry?” Hermione asked him.

“What” He asked not turning around to face her.

“If you notice Fleur doing anything odd” She asked him urgently.

“That’s the orders business not mine. I’m going to be happy with Fleur for as long as possible hopefully forever if not I won’t complain” He said coolly and left the room

He glanced down at his watch he still had time to get a shower himself, he walked off to the second bathroom it was not as large or as luxurious decorated as the largest but it was still much better than the bathroom at Privet Drive. Harry enjoyed a cool shower it was a rather hot summer day. When he was done he found a huge white towel in a cupboard in which he dried himself, he got dressed and exited for the drawing room. He was a couple of minutes late but so was Fleur they arrived at the same time.

“Feels better doesn’t it” Fleur stated.

“Yeah, want some Liquorice?” He asked her as innocently as he could and held out the tiny box.

“Nice try Harry but you shouldn’t have told me before. You first” She said smiling gleefully.

“Right” He said and opened the box picked up a pastille and put it in his mouth it tasted like normal Liquorice.

“Is it working?” She asked him and sat down in one of huge armchairs.

He could feel a burning desire to lie to her “No not at all they must have tricked me” He lied and then added in a mutter to make his lie more convincible “Lucky I didn’t pay anything”

“Oh” Fleur said looking a little disappointed “Maybe it takes some time”

“Yeah how stupid of me of course it takes some time they said it would need about ten minutes to reach full effect” Harry lied.

Fleur looked closely at him “It is working isn’t it?”

“Nope not at all” Harry lied merrily.

“Oh if you say so” Fleur said and smirked “Oh Harry, do you truly love me?” She said in a theatrical voice.

“I’m afraid not my fair lady. I’m deeply in love with my last Defence against the dark arts professor” Harry lied happily.

Fleur lost her smile and asked him seriously “The one who used a blood quill on you?”

“No, that was Sirius Black the notorious mass murderer” He felt bad about his last lie the Liquorice forced him to try to get the most far-fetched lies to seem true.

Fleur giggled a bit “Who do you hate?”

In reality, it was Voldemort and Wormtail but now he need to lie.

“I hate and detest you Fleur above all others then that awful git Ron Weasley and the mudblood Hermione Granger and oh yeah Ginny Weasley the little brat” He said fiercely, he was a bit surprised that he

had used the word mudblood. Fleur looked a little shocked to hear his tone of voice but soon recovered and smiled wickedly

“So tell me darling, which you love above all others” She had developed a grin so evil and playful that the twins would be green of envy.

“My biggest love in this world is Lord Voldemort and Wormtail, unfortunately Wormtail died shortly after Halloween 1981. It’s my biggest sorrow” He lied and pretended to be sad.

“Tell me what you love so much about Voldemort?” Fleur asked him. Harry was a bit surprised that she used his name, but then again her family was dead because of him, and if she were anything like Harry, she would use his name after that.

“Most of all his beautiful singing voice I can’t get enough of it and then he is tall. His skin is white as new fallen snow and then there is his eyes” Harry sighted dramatically “So deep and red, every time I look in to them I’m sure I can see his heart” Harry enjoyed his love description of Lord Voldemort he was quite sure no one had ever described him that way.

Fleur was laughing uncontrollably “I never thought I would hear that” she finally managed to say.

“So why do you hate Ginny Weasley” She asked him again with a wicked smile.

“She’s” but he broke off he couldn’t find anything to say about her “I think it has worn off” He said truthfully.

“Aww” Said Fleur sadly “Now I’ll never know why you hate poor Ginny”

“Nope!” Harry said grinning.

“Look Fleur you don’t have to take it just because I did it” Harry said, he didn’t want to ask Fleur questions that could endanger his newfound world of happiness.

“Don’t be stupid Harry, I’ll be fun” She stated and pulled the little box of Lying Liquorice from him. She opened it and ate one of the pastilles.

“Is it working?” He asked her expecting a no.

“No” Harry looked at her in disbelief “I’m serious Harry!” She said so seriously that Harry wondered for a moment if she actually was serious.

“Oh yeah, tell me do you have any veela blood?” He asked.

“No, I wish I had though I always wanted to be a veela” Fleur lied obviously.

“Oh” Harry knew that Fleur expected him to ask her if he loved her. He regretted very badly that he had thought of the stupid idea to eat Lying Liquorice but it couldn’t be helped.

“Who do you love above all others?” He asked her trying to smile what if he was one of these peoples.

“Ah” Fleur sighted dreamily “my Lord Voldemort of course and my dear, dear classmates from Beauxbaton Ms Reoson and Ms Erion” Fleur said as if she was lost in wonderful dreams of them together.

“So how come you love these particular class mates so much?” Harry asked her.

“They are so loyal to me. They would never dream of doing anything to hurt me. We are very close and love each other very much. Like you Hermione and Ron” Fleur said happily.

“Yeah well they might not love me so much at the moment” Harry muttered. He sat in silence for a moment trying to figure out next question but couldn’t think of anything.

“What wouldn’t you ask a part veela if you knew she would lie” Harry asked.

“If she loves me” Fleur said plainly.

Stupid Harry though stupid, stupid, stupid. Now he had to face reality and ask her the question that hurt him.

"Who do you hate" He asked her and looked down on the floor; he didn't dare to face her.

"I hate you Harry Potter" Harry had never been so relieved in his entire life He was so happy he supposed that Fleur could have tricked the Liquorice but Harry didn't care his dream world was safe "and I hate Bill Weasley and I hate..." She trailed off and started to cry miserably.

Harry jumped up from his chair and stepped over to hers, which only were a couple of feet away from his.

"Are you okay" He asked her as he pulled her close in a hug.

"Yes" She lied and smiled brightly for a short moment before starting to cry again.

"I also hate..." She tried to continue to tell Harry whom she hated but couldn't.

"You don't have to answer" Harry said soothingly. "Just forget about it"

"Gabrielle!" Fleur wailed and cried worse then ever onto Harry's shoulder. Harry gently lifted Fleur off the chair and sat down himself with Fleur in his lap. He had never seen Fleur cry like this. It was horrible too see someone he cared so deeply for wail and screech as if they never were going to be happy again. He just held her and patted her back every now and the he whispered that it was going to be okay. He could see Mrs Weasley run into the room looking very pale as if she had been expecting to see Voldemort himself. She must have heard Fleur screaming but when she saw Harry and Fleur her expression softened and to Harry's great relief turned around and left the room.

"Tell me when it wears off" He whispered to her she looked up at him and nodded, her face was wet with tears and her eyes read and puffy.

Harry felt very bad for her. She bend down in his shoulder and sobbed some more. She slowly stopped crying and looked up at him.

"Do you really think it will ever be okay?" Fleur asked him.

"It just has to be" He replied but he didn't know if it would "I don't remember it but I must have gotten over my parents at some point"

"Do you remember them?" Fleur asked him seriously.

"Not by my self" He said softly.

"What do you mean" She asked him.

"Have you ever met a dementor?" He asked.

"No I don't think so, but we studied them in defence against the dark arts" She said.

"Trust me you would remember if you ever met a dementor" Harry said and shuttered, the pure memory made him feel sick, he sometimes wondered if his boggart ever would turn into something else then a dementor but now he was quite sure they wouldn't.

"Oh" She said "But what does that got to do with your parents?"

"They force me to relive the night" He said "when my parents were killed"

"I'm sorry Harry, but at least you remember something" She said softly.

"Yeah, wish it was something more pleasant though" He muttered.

"I remember that night too. I must have been four years old. We were celebrating Halloween at home with my family and some friends of my parents I only remember it because I had to go to the hospital. Dad scared me and I fell and hit my head so hard that I fainted. I woke up the day after at the hospital. I heard the healer tell my mum that they shouldn't scare me so badly. Later that day we all celebrated that Voldemort was gone." Fleur told him.

"I'll have to remember not scare you then" Harry teased her.

"Shut up" She said smilingly.

"So when's your birthday?" He asked her as he realised he didn't even know how old Fleur was.

"January 30th" She said and then added "1977"

"That makes you 19" Harry stated it felt a little odd being with a girl three years older.

"Yeah" Fleur agreed "I know"

Harry smiled. "Too bad you missed my birthday"

"Right July the 31st" Fleur said.

"You know?" Harry asked her.

"Yeah I'm a faithful fan Harry, of course I know when your birthday is" She explained and smiled viciously.

"Why do I get a feeling you're lying?" Harry asked her suspiciously.

"Because I had no idea until Ginny told me when we got here" Fleur explained with a wide smile "You know I think she might like you Harry"

"You do?" He asked her he felt somewhat flattered that Ginny liked him, now that she didn't adore him but he also felt a bit sad he didn't like her back.

"Yes" Fleur replied. Harry remembered his lesson from Cho, when the girl starts to talk about other peoples she wants to be kissed or at least that was what he remembered. Valentines Day was pretty long ago after all.

He moved closer to her and tilted his face up to hers. Fleur seemed to have realized what he was trying to do because she lowered her head slightly so that she was facing him. Harry looked into her eyes he could feel her warm breath on his face, but he felt nothing what so

ever. His mind panicked he wanted so badly to feel desire maybe if he kissed her and with that thought he bend forward the final inches between them. He felt their lips meet, they were very soft and warm and very alive. He knew that he should feel something by now but he didn't. He parted his lips slightly to kiss her more deeply. Fleur responded by doing the same. Harry had only kissed Cho once like this or rather she had kissed him but he felt as if time had stopped. Harry was now uncomfortably aware of that time passed and he didn't feel anything. He slowly pushed his tongue forward to hear mouth, Fleur did the same and their tongues met. Fleur's tongue was soft, warm and wet it had a very nice taste. He played with her tongue for a moment before his tongue slid across her even teeth and they took turn discovering each other mouths. He had to admit it was nice but it was just as nice just to hug her tightly. He felt miserably and pulled away from the kiss. Fleur looked at him sadly.

"I'm sorry" He said and looked away from her.

"Me too" She replied, Harry didn't know why she was sorry, was he perhaps a bad kisser.

"Was I that bad?" He asked her.

"No, you are a great kisser Harry" Fleur said firmly "And you taste good too"

"Fleur I..." he trailed off maybe he would upset her if he told her. He felt he had too, and maybe, maybe it usually didn't feel anything maybe it was only his nervousness that made the kisses with Cho to feel different.

"Isn't it supposed to feel anything?" He asked clumsily.

"It's supposed to feel wonderful" Fleur said sadly. Harry had found kissing Cho very interesting but he couldn't say that it was wonderful. He had been so confused when she cried all over him. Maybe it was something wrong with him why couldn't he find it wonderful to kiss Fleur or Cho.

"I think there is something wrong with me" He said in a defeated voice and added very fast "Maybe I can't feel desire. What if Voldemort

destroyed me somehow, I know I Love you and I should be excited to kiss you and all. But I can't feel anything... at all."

"Harry, I couldn't feel anything either" Fleur said quietly.

"Well that is not really odd is it, I mean you are beautiful and I'm just..." Harry said but was interrupted.

"Don't say that Harry" Fleur said warningly "You are beautiful if I say so, and I say so"

Harry smiled sadly at her "I love you Fleur"

"I love you too Harry" She replied gently.

"Do you think it will feel better later?" He asked her.

"I don't know Harry. It's all so confusing with Bill and all" Fleur said sadly. Harry kicked himself mentally. He'd kissed Bill's girlfriend, what kind of friend was he?

"Don't Harry" Fleur said as she saw his expression "I can't go on with Bill if I have feelings for you can I?"

"Yes you can!" Harry exclaimed "You love him and you love to kiss him"

"But I don't feel as close to him as I do to you" Fleur said loudly her French accent sounding through more then usual.

Harry sighted.

"Look Harry Bill is away for two weeks and unless they send me on a mission I'm not going anywhere. We will have loads of time to figure every thing out and I bet we are just too torn up to really appreciate anything except closeness" Fleur said trying to logic with the situation. He had completely forgotten that Fleur probably was a spy.

Poor Harry is broken, at last... and as to Hedwig, Harry will have his revenge even if he is too noble to ever see it that way. *Please, Please Review!*

Chapter 8 Mayhem

"Hey, let's go down and help Mrs Weasley with lunch" Harry said "If you feel like it"

"Yeah, sure let me just go and wash up a bit" She answered and gestured to her tear streaked but now smiling face she was glad for a change of subject.

"Meet you down there then" Harry said and stood up with Fleur.

"See you in a bit" She said and walked off towards the bathroom leaving Harry alone. It felt good to know that he and Fleur would give every thing a serious chance. He smiled and walked out towards the kitchens. Mrs Weasley was alone in there.

"Oh, good Harry at least one of thinks of me down here" Mrs Weasley smiled and then added "But I guess Ron and Hermione are too busy?"

Harry blushed on their behalf "Yes I guess you can say that"

"You are all getting so old. I remember having Bill as if it was yesterday" Mrs Weasley said and smiled sadly.

"Why don't you help me with the potatoes?" She said and gestured towards a large pot "I thought we should have mashed potatoes"

Harry washed his hands and started to mash potatoes.

"Are you feeling better today?" Mrs Weasley asked him concernedly after a moment.

"Yeah" Harry muttered he had pushed Hedwig out of his mind and was not quite ready to discuss the matter.

"And Fleur?" Mrs Weasley asked him carefully.

"Yeah, she's better. She was just a little upset about Gabrielle" Harry said.

"Poor dear I can't imagine what she is going through" Mrs Weasley said.

"Yeah" Harry agreed.

Fleur entered the room a few moments later but Mrs Weasley didn't let her help she forced her to sit down at the table and eat an apple. Soon lunch was ready Remus and Ron entered the room, Ron ignored Harry completely he didn't even look at him. Remus too was acting strange he kept looking at Harry and Fleur, maybe Ron and Hermione had told him about giving up. Harry didn't care much he had Fleur sitting next to him.

"Ron" Mrs Weasley asked "Where is Hermione and Ginny"

"Up in their room, said they would come down later" Ron explained. They all started to eat. It was of course as delicious as usual.

"I'm sorry about Hedwig, Harry" Remus said as they ate.

"Thanks" Harry said dismissingly but Remus did not let the matter drop.

"Did you expect an answer from Tonks?" Remus asked politely, Fleur looked questioningly at Harry. He hadn't told her Hedwig was an owl.

"Yeah I asked her something" Harry said he now stopped eating he had lost his appetite.

"Do you mind telling us what you wrote to her?" Remus asked still very politely.

Harry looked up at Mrs Weasley for a short moment he didn't want her to know that he had wanted to leave but he felt that he didn't have much choice.

"I asked her to take me back to privet drive... But I changed my mind" He added hastily as Mrs Weasley looked over at him. Remus looked over at Fleur with a curious expression.

"Harry, why didn't you tell me?" Mrs Weasley asked him.

"I don't know" He lied.

"Harry you know that you can always come to me" Mrs Weasley said.

"I know" He replied.

"Harry I have spoken with Tonks she says that she never even got your letter" Remus said.

"Oh" Harry replied. No one said anything for a moment.

"What happened to her?" Harry finally asked.

Remus sighed "We don't really know Harry; we believe that the rainy weather forced her to rest in a tree somewhere near the ministry of magic because Tonks was there all day doing paper work. We think that somehow someone managed to capture her and take her letter, we don't know if they intended for Hedwig to get away or if she escaped" He said gravely and after a moment he added "Owls are unfortunately very frequent victims in times like these and many owls go missing outside the ministry. Voldemort goes for the weakest first"

Harry sighed "I'll have to bury her" he said shortly he wasn't sure if his voice would carry otherwise.

"Where do you want to bury her?" Remus asked him.

"Hogwarts" Harry replied he was quite sure that Remus asked him where in the garden outside but Harry really didn't want to bury Hedwig here.

"Oh, I can't promise you any thing Harry..." Remus said.

"If Harry wants to bury her at Hogwarts then Hogwarts it is even if I have to create an illegal port key myself!" Mrs Weasley snapped.

They ate in silence after that until the door swung open and a very angry Hermione entered, she glared at him in a way she never had looked at any one except perhaps Draco Malfoy when she had slapped him. Harry gulped.

“Ginny is a tiny bit upset” She said in a deadly calm voice “She says that she won’t come out of her room. So I have to bring her some food”

“She’s upset?” Asked Mrs Weasley urgently and piercing Hermione with her gaze.

“Yes” Answered Hermione as she pulled out a tray from a cupboard.

“Do you know why?” inquired Mrs Weasley.

“No idea” Said Hermione glaring strait at Harry. Was she accusing him for upsetting Ginny? He would never do any such thing. Ginny was one of the people he cared most for in the world. Ever since he had saved her life in the chamber of secrets, he had felt very close to her.

He tried to catch Ron’s eye to see if he also blamed him, but Ron focused to one hundred percent on his food. Hermione brought out two plates and started to fill them with food from the table.

“I’ll go and speak to her” Mrs Weasley said.

“She told me not to let you” Hermione told Mrs Weasley sadly.

“I’m her mother” Mrs Weasley said exasperated.

“Molly, some things are better understood by people of your own age” Remus said softly.

“All right but if she doesn’t come down for dinner” Mrs Weasley said warningly to Hermione.

“I’ll tell her that” Hermione said she cast one final glare at Harry and left.

The lunch progressed in silence after Hermione left, when they were done Ron left quickly. Harry, Fleur and Remus helped Mrs Weasley to clean up. None of them mentioned Ginny at all. Harry spent the day with Fleur in Buckbeak's room exchanging stories about their childhoods. When Harry had told her Ginny had once had a crush on him, Fleur rolled her eyes.

“Don’t be so thick” she said.

He grinned “Sorry can’t help it”

“At least you admit it” Fleur said teasingly “Why do you think Ginny didn’t come down for lunch”

“I don’t know” Harry said.

“She hates me, for stealing you and I guess that Hermione told her we spent the night together” Fleur said “Ginny still has a crush on you”

“But nothing happened!” Harry said.

“Yeah, well why should she believe it?” Fleur replied.

Harry didn’t reply what had he ever done to lead Ginny on he wondered. Why couldn’t she just forget about him, and go and find a nice boy that really loved her. But then Harry felt guilty Ginny had always liked him and he had always ignored her, he could at least have spent some time with her. But his heart had chosen Fleur an almost complete stranger, and even before Ginny had had a chance to say anything about it he had spent a night with her or so Ginny thought.

“I haven’t been very nice to her have I?” Harry asked Fleur but before she could answer, he continued “She always liked me and I didn’t even spend some time with her, I didn’t give her a chance”

“Harry it’s not your fault, it’s not like I chose to love you. If I’m completely honest with you I wish I felt this way for Bill and only Bill. Because he deserves it, he has been so nice to me for over a year. But it doesn’t work like that” Fleur explained.

“Well then maybe we deserve each other anyway. Neither of us deserves someone as nice as them” Harry joked feebly.

“Yeah lucky Hermione though, to be able to love a Weasley and no other” Fleur replied.

“Do you think I should face her?” Harry asked Fleur after a short moment.

“I don’t know Harry it’s not as if you need to explain any thing to her, you never were a couple” Fleur said and sighed Harry sighed too. He knew that if he felt guilty about Ginny it was nothing compared to how guilty Fleur felt about Bill.

“No matter what we’ll always be friends?” He asked even though it hurt.

“No matter what!” Fleur agreed and smiled slightly.

Ginny didn’t turn up for dinner that night though Tonks and to Mrs Weasley displeasure so did Mundungus. Mr Weasley was working late and wouldn’t come back until much later. Harry was quite sure that Mrs Weasley was not leaving the kitchen to see Ginny because of Mundungus she didn’t trust him any further then the twins. Ron and Hermione ignored Harry completely, they sometimes muttered a few words to each other, but otherwise were quiet. Harry was very happy to see Tonks again, and Fleur seemed very happy to get to know her better after all Fleur didn’t have any friends. At the end of the meal, Remus announced that he was going on a mission the following morning and wouldn’t see them for a couple of weeks. Harry would miss Remus but not too badly since Tonks would stay with them when she wasn’t on duty. Harry spent the rest of the evening with Fleur and Tonks in the drawing room.

“It’s getting late” Tonks said. “Wish I had a time turner so I could stay up later, but the ministry would never let me near one with my record of accidents”

“You’re too nice Tonks why don’t you just turn into Fudge or someone when something happens and blame it on him” Fleur suggested.

“I can’t turn into men and don’t tell any one but” Tonks said lowering her voice conspiratorially “I lost hundreds of house points for Slytherin”

“But you’re a Hufflepuff” Harry said.

"Yeah, well let's just say that I made a habit of turning in to a Slytherin when I left the dormitories at night" Tonks whispered.

"I wish I was a Metamorphmagus" Fleur said.

"Well, it's not as if you need it. I mean you're a veela every one loves you the way you are" Tonks said absentmindedly.

"Right" Fleur said rolling her eyes.

"Well I'm off to bed" Tonks exclaimed and got up.

"Tonks, do you mind if I sleep in your room with you?" Fleur asked hastily.

"Sure, but don't keep me up chatting. I need my sleep or I get clumsier than ever" Tonks replied

"I won't" Promised Fleur.

"You're just leaving me here?" Harry asked jokingly.

"Yep" Tonks said.

"See you tomorrow" Fleur said.

"Right, Night" he replied

"Night Harry"

"Don't stay up too late"

He was alone. He got up and decided to go to bed early maybe he would be able to get up early tomorrow and say goodbye to Remus. But where was he going to sleep he wondered but then he decided that he was not the one that had made any mistake. Ron and Hermione would just have to deal with it after all, Fleur had never done anything but to say that she loves him and it was not their business what kind of girls Harry fancied. Soon Harry was standing outside the door to his and Ron's room. He decided to knock he didn't want to walk in on them again.

“Yeah” Ron’s voice sounded through the door. Harry opened the door and found Ron sitting alone for once in the chair.

“Oh, it’s you” Ron said and turning down over the desk. Ron clearly didn’t want to talk to him and Harry was certainly not going to push the matter. Harry changed into his pyjamas and crawled into his bed.

“How can you do this” Ron’s voice asked him. Harry turned and looked up at him.

“Do what?” He asked.

“See Fleur when you know what she is” Ron said angrily.

Harry knew what Ron meant he wondered why Harry had given in to Fleur why he had stopped fighting.

“She says she loves me” Harry said trying to make Ron understand what it felt like for him.

“Well that is damn wonderful isn’t it” Ron said sarcastically “Did you ever consider there might be other girls who might do that, someone who is crying in her room at this moment someone who says that she can’t compete because she is just a little brat”

“I’m Sorry” Harry muttered.

“Ginny truly likes you, and you prefer Fleur’s lies” Ron said sadly.

“I’m Sorry” He repeated.

“Can you imagine Ginny’s reaction if she ever finds out that Fleur is lying to you and you knew it and still preferred Fleur instead of her?” Ron said silently in a very cool voice.

Harry didn’t reply. He didn’t know what to say. He had never in any way encouraged Ginny’s crush on him and now Ron was blaming him for not loving his sister. Still he felt very guilty he could have been a lot nicer to Ginny.

“You know what I think she might kill her self” Ron said dangerously.

"I'm sorry" Was all Harry could think of to say.

Ron looked at Harry in a disgusted way, turned around and walked out of the room. Harry seriously doubted that Ron would ever forgive him for this. He felt very sorry for Ginny, he knew how it was like to be heartbroken. For a few moments he had decided that he would give up Fleur for Ginny just to make Ginny happy but then he realized that by doing so he would not only make himself unhappy but maybe Fleur too. Besides, he doubted that any girl would like to be with a boy just because the boy felt sorry for the girl. He fell asleep a few moments later emotionally exhausted.

"Stupid damn Bloody Hell!"

Harry opened his eyes. The morning sun brightly illuminated the room. Tonks was laying flat down on the floor next to his bed.

"Whassup" He asked her.

"Harry I need to talk to you" She said as she gingerly stood up.

"I'm listening" He said but caught himself drifting off to sleep again.

"You better sit up" Tonks said as she grabbed his hands and pulled him into a sitting position. Harry could now see that Ron wasn't in his bed in fact it looked as he never had slept in it.

"Harry Remus just woke me up and told me that there is a chance that Fleur is using you"

"Yeah" Harry said.

"But why are you with her if you suspect that she is using you" Tonks asked him.

"I love her too much for my own good" He said trying to make sound like a joke.

"You really love her?"

"Yeah"

“Harry you do realize that she might be dangerous”

“Yeah”

“And even if she isn’t she already have a boyfriend”

“Yeah”

“Harry are you awake?”

“Yeah”

“Has she done any thing to you?”

“Yeah... I kissed her once and she kissed me back” He said too tired to really think.

“Only one kiss?” She asked him disbelievingly.

“Yeah”

“Why have you only kissed once if you love each other?” Tonks said raising an eyebrow.

“I didn’t enjoy it all that much” He said truthfully.

“Why she’s gorgeous and she loves you” She said in disbelief. “I thought every thing boys of your age wished for was someone like Fleur”

“It is” Harry said he couldn’t understand why he didn’t enjoy it.

“Can I ask you a question?” She asked, it was very much unlike Tonks to be this subtle.

“Yeah” He said.

“Do you fancy boys?” She asked him carefully.

“No” Harry said firmly after a moment, he was sure of it but then why didn’t I enjoy kissing Fleur he wondered.

“Are you really sure that it is Fleur you love?” She asked him.

“Yes” He replied this was getting annoying.

“Remus told me you can’t be under the imperius, but do you mind if I make sure?” Tonks asked him.

“No” He replied, he couldn’t blame her he would have been suspicious too.

“Right... IMPERIO” Tonks said loudly. It was wonderful all his love troubles were gone, the guilt he felt about Ginny and Bill was also gone but he didn’t realize any of this he just felt so free and relaxed.

“Harry get out of bed” He heard a distant whisper inside his head.

“Never I’m too tired” said a very strong voice in the back of his head.

“Just get out of bed” The distant whisper pleaded.

“I won’t” The voice in the back of his head roared and threw the curse off.

“Harry, get out of bed!” Tonks urged him.

“No way, maybe if you asked me to get back to bed instead I wouldn’t have bothered to throw it off” He said with a grin.

“You threw it off then?” She asked him.

“No, I just got out of bed didn’t you notice?” He teased.

“Oh shut your face” Tonks said in mock anger.

“Maybe if you put the imperius on me” He joked.

Tonks didn’t reply she was thinking deeply.

“Well, I guess we just have to trust Fleur then” Tonks stated.

“Why?” Harry asked him.

“Because she really is Fleur, she takes no polyjuice potion and she is not under the imperius curse” Tonks said and then added “And I don’t think you would be able to love her if she was evil”

Harry didn’t like this at all he didn’t want the Order to rely on him like this. He didn’t want to be responsible if anything happened.

“Well she is too good to be true isn’t she?” Harry asked her angrily.

“No, Harry I know you. You are at least as too good to be true as she is” Tonks replied. Harry didn’t reply he knew that Tonks was trying to cheer him up but it didn’t help. There was no way he could compare with Fleur.

“And if she really was too good to be true. She would have done stuff to you that boys of your age like to dream of” Tonks said and smiled.

“Let me win in Quidditch?” Harry joked feebly; he didn’t like the subject at all.

Tonks smiled at him “Harry I got to go now, I’ve got to be on time today. They got this old bloke who they think is a death eater and I got to follow him around everywhere but he never goes anywhere interesting, honestly if he is a death eater...”

“See you later then?” He asked.

“Yeah, Bye” Tonks replied and left the room stumbling slightly on the doorstep.

Harry dressed and headed down for breakfast a few moments later. All in all, he felt much better now that Tonks had told him that Fleur was not under the imperius curse. However, if she really was as a spy then she was it of her own free will. She might be black mailed he thought, but with what she had already lost her family. When he entered the kitchen, Fleur and Mrs Weasley were already there.

“Morning” He said when he entered.

“Morning Harry” Fleur replied.

"Morning" Mrs Weasley replied very coldly. Harry was a bit surprised by this Mrs Weasley always was very nice and warm towards him. He sat down next to Fleur and started to eat some toast. Mrs Weasley didn't say anything she just looked at him and Fleur coldly. He wondered what he might have done to upset Mrs Weasley like this and then it struck him she had been talking to Ginny and Ginny had told her that Harry have stolen Fleur from Bill. He looked down on his toast, he couldn't face Mrs Weasley. Why was he to be punished like this for loving Fleur he wondered bitterly. He finished breakfast and left with Fleur quickly he didn't want to meet Ron and Hermione if he could help it.

Harry spent the day with Fleur avoiding everyone as much as possible, which was made easy since everyone avoided them even Mrs Weasley.

"It is settled" Mr Weasley told him during dinner he was the only one that wasn't cool towards him "Harry you have been asked to attend the Wizard high court as a witness of Dolores Umbridge's misuse of power 10:30 at august the 23rd. I expect they'll send you an owl any day now informing you"

"Oh, we got a good chance then?" Harry asked him, he was very happy to take attention from his love life.

"Yes, I recon we do. Dumbledore himself will bring you, he is the one behind it all" Mr Weasley said "Dumbledore has even arranged it so that the very same afternoon the Wizengamot will test the werewolf laws, hopefully then most of the Wizengamot will be convinced that Umbridge was not impartial and fair when she wrote those laws"

"Oh, do I need to do anything?" Harry asked him, he wasn't really sure how the wizard justice system worked.

"Just tell them what happened they will want to see your scar but that should be all" Mr Weasley replied.

The dinner continued in silence after that. Mrs Weasley looked at him with a slightly softer expression, though she still glared at Fleur. Tonks arrived later that evening exhausted, she went to bed almost at once and Fleur followed her leaving Harry alone. Harry went to bed

and noticed that Ron wasn't in their room. The following day progressed in pretty much the same way.

He and Fleur decided that they should cremate Hedwig and when Harry returned to Hogwarts, he would spread the ashes from the astronomy tower. Fleur conjured a very nice urn for the ashes and burned Hedwig with magic. It was all very sad; he didn't think he could have gone through with it if Fleur hadn't been there for him. Ron and Hermione continued to ignore him and Ginny wouldn't leave her room. Mrs Weasley however seemed to forgive him after a few days and let him help prepare dinner. Tonks arrived late again and went to bed together with Fleur almost at once, Harry decided to go to bed too. Ron was not in the room today either, but Harry didn't care if he was going to be thick headed that was his problem.

Harry lay staring up in the ceiling, he felt lost without his best friends. He didn't really know what to do, he didn't want them to hate him and he didn't want Ginny to be sad. The following morning Harry's mood improved, Ginny turned up for breakfast as usual but didn't bother to hide the fact that she was hurt and had been crying. Harry didn't sit too close to Fleur not to make matters worse. After breakfast, Harry and Fleur stalked off to the drawing room where they usually spent most of their time.

"It's just odd she had a boyfriend and seemed to have forgotten me and now..." Harry sighed.

"Well she is a teenage girl" Fleur stated "Some got it worse than other"

"What?" Harry asked.

"Hormones" Fleur explained shortly.

"Oh Harry I forgot to tell you" Fleur exclaimed suddenly "They are making me an official order member the 23rd when you and Dumbledore get back from the ministry"

"That's great Fleur"

“Yeah, then maybe I will be able to actually do something. I think Bill made them take me in early because he didn’t want me to be alone” Fleur told him and sighed.

“He didn’t want you to be alone, I though you two saw each other frequently?” Harry asked.

“Well he didn’t want me to be alone at all” Fleur said hesitantly “He kind of... well... I was really sad there for a while”

Harry froze “You didn’t actually try anything did you?”

“Oh no of course not” Fleur said quickly “He just... well I told him I was considering ending it... and he kind of found some pretty strong potions ingredients in my apartment. Don’t look like that Harry I didn’t do anything and I won’t do anything I am not that sad anymore”

I know some things in this chapter might suggest that Tonks and Fleur have sex, and that is not a bad idea (they would make a nice couple!) but they don’t. Fleur just really wants Tonks as a friend and is unsure how to behave since she doesn’t have much experience with friends. There is no slash at all in this fic.

Now please, please, **Review!**

Next Chapter “Feathers”

Chapter 9 Feathers

The days past with out any bigger events, Ginny seemed to get over Harry somewhat and would at least speak in his present though never to him and definitely not to Fleur. Harry and Fleur knew each other so well that they almost could read each other thoughts, he was much closer to Fleur then he had ever been to anyone else. He became more and more sure that she wasn't a spy; in fact the mere idea of Fleur being evil was ludicrous. Tonks agreed with him; she and Fleur had become very good friends, they always went to bed at the same time and most usually ate breakfast together with Harry. Ron ignored Harry as much as ever but Hermione seemed to have lost some of her anger and didn't glare at Harry though she wouldn't talk to him. Harry missed them even though he had Fleur and Tonks as friends it wasn't the same as Ron and Hermione.

Bill was arriving tomorrow to stay for a few days as planed. Harry and Fleur were sitting in Buckbeak's room trying to sort out their feeling for each other.

"Harry what are we going to do?" She asked him exasperated. "He's coming tomorrow and I don't have a clue of what to do"

"I can't help you" Harry replied "You are going to have to tell him about us"

"It will break his heart" Fleur exclaimed "And I do love him"

"Why do I have to choose?" She wailed so loudly that Buckbeak flapped his wings indignantly.

Harry didn't know what to say so he remained silent.

Fleur approached him silently, with an expression that Harry had never seen on her face before. He couldn't quite make it out her expression was firm and yet very soft he noticed that her hair had started to move as if a wind was blowing in the room. She stopped a few inches away from him. She looked him in his eyes; Harry could see something in hers that normally wasn't there desire and for the first time in several days sadness. He realized what she was about to do a moment before she did it she was going to kiss him. She put her

arms around him and pulled his face to hers. Harry could feel her lips make contact with his they were not as soft as last time he had kissed her, though they were still very warm and nice. Fleur took Harry a bit by surprise when he almost at once could feel her warm tongue licking his lips to gain entrance to his mouth, Harry allowed her. As Fleur almost violently let her tongue roam in his mouth she pushed her body close to his. It was nice, but not as exciting, as it should be Harry thought sadly but if Fleur wanted him she was going to get him. Harry started to kiss her back in the same violent manner. He put his arm around her back and started to hug her feverishly in the same way that she hugged him. After a few moments, Fleur broke the kiss. She looked Harry in his eyes and started to pull off his shirt, his glasses fell to the floor. Harry was a little surprised by this but he didn't mind he loved Fleur after all. Once his shirt was off Fleur kissed him again. He let his hands wander down her back and finally down to her but, he could feel Fleur kiss even more violently in response to this. She pulled away after a moment and started to pull off her blouse, Harry help her. He could see her chest more clearly than ever though she still wore her bra. She moved close to Harry again and kissed him passionately. He could feel her warm chest against his he could feel her softness. He moved her hands over her naked back. Fleur had a very nice back warm and smooth.

She broke the kiss for a moment "Take it off" She whispered Harry swallowed before she kissed him again.

Harry moved his hands over to the bra fastenings and undid them. Fleur moved away from him a few inches not breaking the kiss but allowing her bra to fall to the floor. She moved close to him again pressing her body hard against his. Harry could feel every little shape of her pressed against his body, he knew that he should feel desire and excitement but he felt nothing but the shape of her and her warmth.

Harry could feel something wet on his face he opened his eyes and saw that Fleur was crying silently. Fleur broke the kiss.

"Touch them Harry" She whispered to him. He knew what she wanted him to do but didn't.

“Why are you crying Fleur?” Harry asked her.

“Touch them” She begged him urgently.

“Why are you crying” He asked her firmly, he wouldn’t do anything to her unless she told him what was wrong.

“You will touch them” Fleur hissed and pulled one of his hands towards her chest.

“No” Harry replied and pulled his hand away from her. Fleur’s expression changed from angry to furious in a second and then he could see her sprout feathers all over her body. She wasn’t remotely desirable any more. From her back, she sprouted two huge silvery wings, her arms lost their smoothness and resembled Buckbeak’s front legs and her head had changed form slightly so that it resembled a bird head. In an odd way, she was still somewhat cute at least to Harry. She obviously thought of herself much worse than she actually was Harry realised.

He couldn’t help smiling slightly though the sight of a gigantic Fleur bird should be frightening. Fleur bent her head and glared at him with one eye the way birds do. Her eye colour was still the same though her eye was about twice its normal size.

“STOP SMILING” Fleur yelled at him and Harry could see sparks in her bony bird claws. Buckbeak had pulled back into a corner of the room his beak half-open ready to attack if provoked.

“Sorry” He said but he couldn’t prevent his smile.

“I SAID STOP SMILING” She yelled again.

“I’m sorry” He said urgently but couldn’t lose his smile.

“YOU FIND ME FUNNY” She bellowed, he could see small flames erupting from between her talons.

“No, of course not” He said seriously and was finally able to stop smiling.

“Why did you smile then?” She hissed dangerously.

“Because you are quite cute when you get angry” He admitted. Fleur looked at him curiously for a moment and then she started to cry. She lost all her feathers and became human again.

“What are you so sad about?” He asked her as he pulled her into a hug, he didn’t notice that she was half naked or any of her shapes that touched his body. Fleur didn’t reply she sobbed onto his naked shoulder. Harry patted her back gently, led her over to the bed and made her sit down next to him. Fleur continued to sob for a very long time. Harry who didn’t even know why she was crying couldn’t think of any thing to say to her so they just sat there.

“My dad used to tell me that” She said quietly.

“Oh, I’m sorry Fleur I didn’t know”

“Don’t be sorry Harry, it was a nice thing to say” Fleur replied still very silently.

“I meant it” Harry said softly.

“Thanks” Fleur whispered “wing-ban” she mumbled to herself.

“Why were you sad to begin with?” He asked her after a moment.

“You wouldn’t touch me” Fleur said and Harry suddenly became aware of that she was half naked and had her body pressed against his.

“Oh” Harry said “But I mean before that”

“I’m sorry Harry but I used you” Fleur said sadly. Harry startled she had used him then Ron and Hermione were right. Harry’s heart sank; he felt hot tears rolling down his cheeks. His dream was over and it was time to pay, and he would he thought bitterly. Then it occurred that she was sorry maybe she didn’t like what she had done, maybe she was forced to do it but it didn’t really matter she didn’t truly love him.

"Oh Harry Please don't cry. I'm so sorry. I'm so stupid" Fleur exclaimed tears started to roll down her face again and she hugged him hard.

"Don't cry Fleur it was my choice I knew all along" Harry stated softly, tears were still rolling down his face but they were completely silent.

"Why did you?" He asked her after a few seconds.

"I'm sorry Harry but I needed to know..." She trailed off for a moment "if I wanted you"

"What" He asked her, why would she want him for any thing? Was she going to do some dangerous dark potion like the one Voldemort had used to get his body back?

"I needed to know if I want you the way I want Bill" Fleur explained.

"What" Harry asked her he didn't understand anything anymore.

"I thought it was a way to determine" Fleur stated and then added "but now I more confused then ever"

"What" Harry asked her and then added "determine what?"

"What to tell Bill of course" Fleur stated and looked at Harry questionably "What did you think I meant"

"You're not working for him" Harry asked his heart was beating very fast by now.

"Who?" Fleur asked him and raised an eyebrow.

"Voldemort"

"What?" Fleur asked him looking very shocked.

"Do you love me Fleur" He asked her just to make sure that he had misunderstood something.

"You know I do" She replied "What did you mean about Voldemort?"

Harry still had tears rolling down but now he was laughing out in relief. He didn't know why but this was all the evidence he needed to truly believe Fleur was not a spy.

"I love you Fleur" He said and pecked her.

"What are you on about?" She asked him.

"Well remember when you first got here and you told me that you loved me? Well anyway Hermione found out and told me that you used your evil veela powers on me to get information about the order" Harry said happily but Fleur looked as if she might turn into a bird again.

"And you believed her" Fleur asked him dangerously.

"What would a beautiful girl like you want with me otherwise" Harry explained.

"So you believed her" Fleur stated and started to cry silently again.

"I'm sorry Fleur, but I didn't know you then" Harry explained and tried to hug her but she turned away from him.

"So you just decided to get the evil veela back by pretending that you loved her too?" She asked him viciously. He could see that her skin would turn in to feathers any second.

"No" He said forcefully "I always loved you Fleur. The day Hedwig died I decided that I had to be with you even if you were Voldemort himself. Why do you think Ron and Hermione won't talk to me?"

Fleur's skin relaxed "I thought they felt sorry for Ginny and that I'm Bill's girlfriend"

Harry smiled sadly "I told them that I wanted to be with you no matter what and that if you were a part of Voldemort's network it wasn't their business but the orders"

“Yeah I remember, you told me you told Hermione that you didn’t care if I killed you” Fleur said and then added “But I thought you were joking”

“I wasn’t. Anyway Ron got ten times angrier at me because I choose your sweet lies above Ginny’s true love” Harry said sadly and added after a moment “Luckily Ginny doesn’t know anything about that”

“What about Tonks?” Fleur asked him and tear started to role down her cheeks again.

“She came to me the morning Remus left and made sure that I wasn’t under the Imperius. She also told me that you weren’t under it either and that if I loved you, you couldn’t be that bad” Harry explained.

“She never thought I was evil?” Fleur asked hopefully.

“Not a second” Harry replied and smiled. Fleur hugged him tightly. Harry once more remembered that she was half naked though he didn’t mind and Fleur didn’t seem to mind that much either they loved each other after all.

“So?” She asked him “I can forgive you for thinking I was using you if you can forgive me for using you”

They both laughed for a moment.

“Harry I’m sorry but I didn’t feel anything” Fleur said apologetically “I though that if I just got going it would come natural... but it didn’t”

“I’m sorry too Fleur you are wonderful and all but not” He didn’t know if he dared to say ‘exciting’ but he didn’t have to.

“Exciting” Fleur stated.

“Yeah” Harry said thankfully and then added sadly “Tonks asked me if I fancied boys”

“Well, you don’t” Fleur told him.

“How can you be so sure?” He asked her.

"Trust me Harry you don't" Fleur replied simply

Harry sighed, he was sure that he fancied girls and not boys but something had to be wrong with him for not desiring Fleur.

"So what are you going to do?" He asked.

"I don't know" Fleur sighed "I'm more confused now then ever"

"It really doesn't matter does it? I'll be going to Hogwarts and I won't see you until Christmas" Harry said sadly "And if you still love me when I get back"

"I will always love you Harry" Fleur said sadly "I can't just pretend you don't exists because you're at Hogwarts"

"I'm sorry Fleur but if it is to any help I will always love you too" Harry said sadly.

Fleur sighed heavily.

"Let's get dressed" Harry said. He picked up Fleur's things from the floor and threw them to her.

"Didn't they do anything for you" She asked him curiously pointing her chest at him.

"You are very sweet and cosy" He said and then added sadly "You would drive Bill mad"

Fleur smiled sadly at him and started to get dressed. They didn't mention Bill for the rest of the day it was a silent commitment not to worry about Bill or what was going to happen when Harry had to leave for Hogwarts. They spend the rest of the day as usual Fleur went to bed with Tonks and left Harry alone in the drawing room. He got up after a few minutes and headed for bed, he wasn't rally tired yet maybe he should read some more in 'Dueling for Masters' he had read quite a lot lately in fact most waken moments that he didn't spend with Fleur he sat reading. He turned a corner and walked strait into Hermione knocking her to the floor. He completely forgot that

they weren't talking to each other when he saw her surprised expression.

"Sorry Hermione" He said and quickly pulled her up.

"Its okay" She said and looked away from him. Harry noticed a flesh colour string along the floor leading towards the drawing room. The other end Hermione had in her ear.

"You have been spying on me" He asked her sadly.

"Well, you didn't expect me to let you get killed just because we aren't talking?" Hermione asked him angrily but sadly at the same time.

"Fleur isn't going to kill me" Harry said firmly "It's just ridiculous"

"Harry you don't know what you are saying veela has been known through the ages to use men" Hermione said very quickly.

"Oh, so I suppose that Hagrid is evil too, after all, all giants are evil. Just like all house elves likes to be enslaved" He told her angrily.

Hermione didn't reply she looked sadly down on the floor. He knew somehow that Hermione had used the fact that Fleur was a part veela as a tool to get to him. He felt angry with her, he wanted to shout at her but she already looked very miserable so he didn't.

"If you and Ron don't like Fleur it's fine with me I'm not forcing you to like each other, but you have no right telling me what girlfriend to choose" He told her as calmly as he could.

"I know" Hermione said still looking down.

"Do you know that she isn't under the imperius?" Harry asked her.

"Yes" Hermione said shortly.

"Is it that unbelievable that Fleur would actually love me?"

"No" Hermione whispered.

"Why do you think she is trying to kill me then?" Harry hissed angrily.

"I don't" Hermione answered Harry couldn't see her face due to her bushy hair, but he thought he saw a tear fall from behind her hair down to the floor. Why did every girl he meets these days have to cry he wondered bitterly. He hated to see Hermione cry at that moment he couldn't be angry at her if she was crying it just wasn't possible.

"Don't cry, Hermione" He said as angrily as he could but to no good his voice was as soft as ever.

"I'm sorry Harry" She apologized.

"You don't have to apologize for crying" He stated.

"No I'm sorry for not letting you choose your girlfriend" She explained.

"Oh, but why were you spying on us?" He asked her.

"Ron won't talk to me" She sobbed still looking down on the floor.

"What is it with me, why does every girl I care for have to cry" He joked trying to ease the tense mood.

"Can you forgive me Harry?" She asked him and looked up at him for a short moment. Her face was tear-streaked and her eyes were slightly red.

"Yes" He said and smiled slightly and then added "Want some tea?"

"Ok" Hermione said shortly and they were off towards the kitchens, they walked in silence. Hermione didn't say anything not even when they sat down drinking tea.

"So tell me why do every girl I care for cry?" He asked her smiling slightly.

"Well" Hermione said in a poor attempt of her bossy voice "it's not really that hard to figure out..." She trailed off unable to go on instead she took a sip of tea.

"What about Ron" Harry asked her seriously.

Hermione choked on her tea and sputtered it all over the table. He should have waited to ask her until she had finished her sip.

“Ron really cares for Ginny, Harry. He hates you for betraying us and he hates you even more for not giving Ginny a chance. Two days ago, I tried to explain that Fleur might not be using you and that you might actually be in love with each other. Then he started to yell all sorts of things and I yelled back and since then we haven’t spoken he won’t even look at me. So I started to spy on you so that I could prove that Fleur was a spy, but she isn’t” Hermione said very quickly and then wailed “and now I don’t know what to do!” she started to sob down in her arms.

“Hermione” Harry said softly. “Don’t worry we’ll think of something. He can’t be angry at you forever, he loves you”

“That’s the problem Harry I’m not sure that he does” Hermione sobbed.

“Why else would he say that he wished you still had your old teeth” Harry asked her.

Hermione blushed.

“You heard?” She asked him.

“Yes” Harry admitted “Later that day when I walked in on you sleeping, Ron had a huge smile on his face and you looked so peaceful”

Hermione smiled sadly “I told him he was an immature fool and that I never knew what I saw in him”

“Oh come on Hermione that’s what you love about him” Harry said with a smile.

“I don’t like him for being immature” Hermione said crossly.

“Yes, you do you absolutely love to tell him that he should worry about homework and NEWTS not to mention S.P.E.W” Harry stated

"I do not" Hermione said angrily her tears for the moment forgotten.

"Yes, you do and Ron loves to be told off by you for being childish. In fact he provokes you; you would think that he would learn and accept that you are very interested in getting good grades by now but he always acts surprised"

"And you told me girls were hard to understand" Hermione said dryly.

"Well, you would see it too but you are too emotionally involved" Harry stated and then added "So do you confess, you love to bicker with Ron"

Hermione didn't reply. Harry wasn't entirely sure that Hermione had realised this herself.

"I figured it out when you mentioned that we only have two years until our NEWTs and Ron just had to comment. That's why I was smiling if you remember" He said and then added after a few moments "That's how it started"

"I'm sorry but it would have happened anyway. And Harry, Ron and I have bickered since first year long before I ever thought of him that way"

"Oh, come on Hermione would you have told Neville that he made the levitation charm wrong in that way" Harry said teasingly.

"I didn't even know him then" Hermione protested.

"Admit at least that you wanted to set him straight more than everybody else"

"He was really annoying" Hermione exclaimed.

"Yeah maybe, but he still loves you" Harry said and he knew Hermione believed him.

Hermione took another sip of tea and so did Harry.

"So, how is Fleur?" Hermione asked him.

“Not to good Bill is arriving tomorrow” Harry stated.

“Oh... is she going to break up with him?” Hermione asked carefully.

“No idea, she says she is confused” Harry replied and took a long gulp of tea.

“Oh then she needs more time. I bet she knows perfectly well how she feels about Bill I mean they have been seeing each other for more then a year. She has just known you, for what about two weeks and that is not a very long time to figure out relationships especially as her family just died and she will be joining the order in a couple of days” Hermione said calmly.

“But we haven't got time, we're leaving for Hogwarts” Harry said.

“Don't worry about that, if you really love each other that won't matter” Hermione said “so tell me what is Fleur like? Is she like Cho?”

“No she's nothing like Cho, well she cries a lot” Harry said.

“No I mean what is she like” Hermione asked softly.

“She's smart and she's really witty and she's good at Arithmancy too” Harry told her happily all he knew and felt about Fleur and Hermione was very happy for him. They cleaned up after them self and walked up to their bedrooms.

“So how's Ginny doing?” He asked her as they walked up the stairs.

“Better, but not good, she's still cries sometimes” Hermione said sadly.

“Why is she so upset, I never led her on and she had a boyfriend last term” Harry asked her urgently.

“I don't know Harry. It's odd I think she is hiding something in fact I'm not even sure it's about you at all, but she won't tell me anything” Hermione said. They walked in silence down the corridor towards Hermione's room.

“Good night then” Harry said.

“Night Harry” Hermione said and walked inside her room.

Harry awoke the next morning by a knock on the door; he hadn't been woken in this way for several days. Fleur always went to breakfast with Tonks and he usually met them down there.

“Harry?” Hermione's voice sounded through the door.

“Yeah” He replied sleepily he wondered why Hermione would wake him up, but then he remembered that she had apologized to him last night.

“Hurry up or we'll be late for breakfast” He heard her voice say.

“Yeah hold on a minute” He stumbled out of bed found his clothes and got dressed quickly. He glanced at his Foe Glass as usual it had become a bit of a habit or rather a compulsorily action he had to perform every time he woke up and went to bed. He had never seen anything but distant dark figures in it and today was no different. He walked over to the door and left the room, Hermione was leaning against the wall on the opposite side of the corridor.

“Morning” She said.

“Morning” He replied “Aren't you going down with Ginny?”

“No, she got ready before me” Hermione told him.

“So what have you been up to these days?” He asked her.

“Not much been a lot with Ron and Ginny” She answered “And reading of course”

“Speaking of reading have you read ‘Dueling for Masters’”

“No, but I know it's really great. Loads of other books refer to it and if you are want to learn how to duel it is the book to read” Hermione explained enthusiastically “I'd love to borrow it when you're done”

“Sure, you know the author was an Order member?” He asked her.

"No, Edgar Bones was in the Order? All I knew was that he was murdered by the Voldemort himself shortly after the book was finished. Rumour is that they duelled for hours, caused great publicity for the book so the publisher printed them in the most expensive paper and had dragon skin as cover and as that wasn't enough they only printed very few copies. Then when the unforgivables were forbidden again they were forced to stop printing the book" Hermione explained.

"So how did you manage to get this book?" Harry asked her.

"It wasn't easy I asked the shop-assistant in Flourish and Blotts for it, he told me that I shouldn't read book's like that but then I told him it was for Harry Potter and he said that he might be able to get the book through his private connections, if I had the gold" Hermione said.

"How much did you pay for it?" He asked worriedly.

"Remus donated 50 galleons from his heritage and the rest of us managed to come up with a galleon each" She told him very quickly as if hoping he wouldn't realise what she had just said.

"You paid 75 galleons for a book?" He asked her incredulously. No book was worth that much; he could easily get a Nimbus 2000 for that kind of money.

"Harry it's not just a book it's the 'Dueling for Masters' and we got it for a really low price since it was to you. I have seen some ads in the daily prophet were collectors offers as much as a 100 galleons. And I recon now that it belongs to the-boy-who-lived it's worth much more then 100 galleons" She explained. Harry felt the colour drain from him. He had a book in his trunk that cost about 100 galleons what if he accidentally had ruined it.

"I've been storing it in my trunk what if I would have spilled ink on it?" He asked her irritably.

"That book got about as many protective charms as your Firebolt, it would take a trained curse breaker to do any damage to it, for example we had to tear the old first page out to get rid of the old inscription" She explained.

“You tore a page out of a book that costs at least 75 galleons?”

“Yes but it doesn’t matter the page will grow back when you close the book, so if you want to give any one a page of the book just tear it out”

“Are you sure?” He asked her, he had never heard of a ‘page regrowing charm’ before but then again it was Hermione he was talking to.

“Yes, I’ll show you later” She said as they entered the kitchen.

Tonks wasn’t there but it wasn’t all that odd, he usually didn’t get up this late. Ginny and Ron was sitting at one side of the table talking quietly. Mrs Weasley sat in the middle and Fleur was sitting alone at the far end.

“Morning Harry” Fleur said and then looked curiously at Hermione.

“Morning” Harry replied to all of them. He gave Fleur a look that he knew would tell her that Hermione has apologized and that she would be eating breakfast with them.

Fleur smiled slightly at him and gave him a look that told him that she needed an apology from Hermione first. Harry hoped that Hermione would have sense to figure this out by herself. He sat down next to Fleur and Hermione sat down next to him, he could see that Ron looked over at Hermione when he thought no one was looking, Harry didn’t dare to look directly at Ron but he didn’t have to he could see that Ron was furious at Hermione and also very sad.

They sat in silence for a moment and Fleur looked expectantly at Harry. Harry kicked Hermione softly under the table.

“Ouch” She said and looked at Harry half a second before she realized that she had to apologize to Fleur.

“Fleur” Hermione said quietly but firmly “I don’t know if you noticed the way Ron looked at you before, it made me jealous of you and I jumped to conclusion about you. I am sorry for believing that you could be a spy.” Harry felt proud of having Hermione as a friend, he

doubted that any other girl except Ginny perhaps in Hogwarts could have apologized this well.

“Apology accepted” Fleur said and smiled at Hermione.

“Thanks” Hermione replied and started to fill her plate with bacon.

“If you don’t mind me asking, why are you not with Ron?” Fleur asked Hermione carefully.

“Oh, well, we had a disagreement” Hermione said and looked up first at Fleur and then at Harry. She seem to realize that Harry would tell Fleur every thing and that she might just as well tell Fleur herself “As you probably know Ron cares very much for Ginny and he seems to think that it is your and Harry’s fault that she is unhappy. I tried to tell Ron differently and we ended up yelling at each other the other day we haven’t spoken since”

Fleur sat silent for a moment before she spoke “Ron is a very boyish boy and on top of that a Weasley. If you kiss him he will forget that he was ever angry at you but you should add a ‘I don’t want to fight with you’ just to make sure”

Harry was surprised by Fleur’s direct solution to the problem, it was not girlish or full of emotional explanations it was strait to the point and no fluff.

“Are you sure?” Hermione asked her she too seemed a bit surprised by Fleur’s cold solution.

“Yes, it’s in my blood. I know how to seduce boys” Fleur stated not looking up from her plate.

Hermione looked very guilty “Wouldn’t that be like cheating, I mean to play on his emotions like that and use them to make up with me?”

“Yeah a little, but to not would be to torment him, just look at him he is heartbroken” She said and nodded sadly in Ron’s direction. Harry and Hermione looked over at Ron, he really looked sad even sadder then Ginny; he hadn’t eaten his toast or drunk any of his juice.

After breakfast, Hermione left Harry and Fleur alone in the drawing room to go and make up with Ron.

“So what would a girl need to do to seduce me?” Harry asked Fleur playfully.

“You’re not as easy as a Ron because you don’t act your emotions like he” Fleur replied with a teasingly smile. “At least not those emotions”

“Don’t tell me you don’t have a clue?” Harry asked her also grinning.

“Well, if you really want to know. She would have to get to know you first; it could easily be done by playing at your compassion. Technically she just has to figure out a very sad story and then pretend to be brave. She would do well admiring you for your courage and Quidditch skill as well. Physically you tend to favour girls... but you probably already know what you like”

Harry was a little shocked when Fleur wriggled her seducing, she was right of course Harry always tended to look at a girls hips first. He wondered for a moment if she had seen him looking at her hips or if she just could feel it somehow with help of her veela powers.

“Right I will look out for that combination then” He said.

“You better” she warned him smilingly but after a few moments she lost her smile. Harry knew she was thinking of Bill.

“Hermione told me what to do” Harry said.

“What?” Fleur sighed.

“She said that you need more time to figure out your feelings” Harry said, he knew it didn’t sound as much but it was the only right thing to do.

“That’s it?” Fleur asked sadly “I could have told you that myself”

“Yeah, but that’s what you have to tell Bill it’s the right thing to do so don’t worry about it” Harry said comforting. “Either Bill accepts this

and waits for you to find out how you feel or he doesn't love you enough to do that"

"You make it sound so simple" Fleur said and sighed. Harry didn't reply, he could barely imagine how Fleur must feel.

"I'll stay in my room mostly while he is here. I reckon he'll hate me" Harry said after a couple of minutes.

"Yeah, it's safer that way" Fleur agreed sadly.

As the day progressed, Fleur got more and more nervous. Bill would be arriving for dinner. Fleur was breaking into little pieces every time someone walked in the stairs think it would be Bill. When it finally was time for dinner preparations Harry pulled Fleur down to the kitchens and had her drinking tea while he help Mrs Weasley. Ginny was there too and she actually managed a small 'Hi' when they arrived. Harry greeted her back and smiled. He was very happy that Ginny was starting to talk to him again. He missed her almost as much as Ron he realised even if he never really were close to her she had always supported him. A few minutes later Ron and Hermione entered the room, Ron was looking at him and Fleur when he thought that nobody saw him. Hermione on the other hand beamed at Fleur, apparently, Fleur's solution had worked much better then Hermione had dared to hope. A few moments later Tonks, Mr Weasley and Bill entered the kitchen. Tonks and Mr Weasley greeted every one cheerfully but Bill didn't he was hardly looking at Harry when he said a short 'Hello'. Harry thought he would feel jealous towards Bill but didn't he sorry for him instead and guilty, he managed an equally short 'Hello' back.

Harry didn't pay much attention to anyone during dinner; he sat between Tonks and Hermione. Neither of them forced him to have any conversation, he ate quickly in silence and excused himself early and left. He walked up to his room and continued to read 'Duelling for Masters' he had now finished the first section and was about to start reading about offensive dueling when Hermione knocked on the door and entered.

"Hello Harry" She said "Don't worry Fleur won't give you up that easily"

Harry sighed.

“Are you reading?” Hermione asked him after a few moments changing the subject.

“Yeah, want me to read aloud? I was just going to start on offensive dueling.” Harry told her.

“Yeah okay, just give me a quick resume of defensive dueling first” Hermione said.

“The book starts with the importance of not being hit; it describes several different reflex enhancing spells. After that, it is the importance of not being seen. And then shield charms and counter jinxes” Harry explained.

“I count do with some reflex improving charms” Hermione ventured.

“You got great reflexes when you hit Malfoy” Harry replied smiling slightly.

Hermione smiled slightly “I can’t rely on getting mad to duel”

“Do you want me to tear the first pages instead?” Harry asked her nervously, he didn’t like the idea of tearing pages out of a so expensive book.

“If it is okay?” Hermione asked hopefully.

“Yeah” Harry said and flicked back to the first pages. There was a blank page in the beginning of the book. “I better try with this first” Hermione nodded and smiled. He tore the page out of the book and closed it. When he opened the book again, he saw that there was a new blank page in the beginning of the book. He smiled to himself.

“How come there aren’t loads of copies of the book if you can just rip all the pages out?” He asked.

“It doesn’t work like that, the pages aren’t real. They disappear after a few hours” Hermione explained softly not in her-know-it-all tune at all.

“Oh” He said and opened the book, he didn’t dare ripping out more than one page at a time from the book so he ripped the introduction out first then closed the book waited a second and then opened the book again and ripped the second page out. For every page he tore out, Hermione looked happier and happier as if she was a seven-year old counting Christmas presents.

“Here’s the first chapter” He said handing her a bunch of papers. He could see Hermione practically shivering with excitement.

“Thanks Harry” She exclaimed as she took the torn out pages from him, skipped over to Ron’s bed and started to read eagerly.

Harry opened the book again and saw that the first chapter looked much newer than the rest of the book. He flicked over to the second section of the book ‘offensive dueling’.

‘This section covers most of the spells, curses and jinxes used by modern wizards and witches’ The section started. The first chapter in the section was about determining what kind of force that was necessary to be victorious and if the opponent had any hidden abilities, for example if the opponent was an animagus, knew how to become invisible or was a parselmouth.

“Hrm” Hermione cleared her throat. Harry looked at her she looked expectantly at him.

“Already done?” Harry asked her.

“Yes, he’s a great writer” Hermione exclaimed happily.

“Hold on a moment” He said and flicked to the second chapter about agility charms. He tore the pages out one after one and after about a minute, he was done with second chapter. He handed it to Hermione who grabbed it eagerly, skipped back to Ron’s bed and started to read again.

He continued to read about discovering what kind of hidden abilities a wizard could have, and how to figure out what these might be. There was no way of being sure, so the book suggested not to take any chances. If you managed to figure out that your opponent was an

animagi then you could lock their animagi power with a simple charm. They continued to read the entire evening.

"Hermione it's late" He said sleepily he had the habit of going to bed early.

"I know just let me finish this" Hermione said urgently. He let her continue for a few minutes.

"I'm tired Hermione, why don't you finish tomorrow?" He asked her. "If you get up early you can just sneak in here and take the book"

"All right" She gave in. Ron's bed was covered in papers; some Harry noticed had started to fade and had become slightly transparent.

"Guess I won't have to pick them up" Hermione said sleepily, got up and walked out the door bidding Harry a good night.

Harry fell asleep almost at once. He was so tired that the fact that Fleur had spent the evening with Bill didn't bother him, too much. He awoke the following morning by the sound of pages in a book being turned. He glanced over at his watch it was almost 6:30.

"Hermione" He groaned.

"Oh, sorry Harry did I wake you?" Hermione's voice said though she didn't really sound sorry.

"Yes" Harry grunted, sleepily.

"If we hurry we have a chance to eat breakfast before everyone else" Hermione said.

Harry was at once clear awake; with any luck he could eat breakfast before Bill. Bill like Ron had a tendency to sleep as long as possible before getting up and hopefully to day wouldn't be an exception.

"Right, turn away" He told her and started to get dressed he glanced in his foe glass as usual but there was nothing unusual in there. Good he thought bitterly at least Bill doesn't want to kill me.

"When did you wake up?" He asked as he pulled a comb through his hair trying to make it lie down.

"About half an hour ago, I just couldn't sleep those shielding charms are really fascinating" Hermione exclaimed. "Ready to go?"

"Yeah" Harry said and walked together with Hermione down for breakfast. To Harry's great relief Bill wasn't in the kitchen, in fact the kitchen was almost empty only two persons were eating breakfast Tonks and Fleur.

"Morning" Harry said stiffly as he entered.

"Morning Harry, Hermione" Tonks said happily.

"Morning" Hermione replied and after a short moment, Fleur said a stiff "Morning".

"Harry I have to warn you about being an auror" Tonks said as seriously as she could. "You have to stand guard for hours and after that you have to fill out forms saying that nothing happened for several more hours and on top of that you don't get weekends off if something happens"

"You wouldn't have to fill out forms for hours if you didn't have to spill ink on them all the time" Fleur said teasingly.

"It's not my fault I'm clumsy" Tonks replied tiredly.

"Why don't you buy a quick quotes quill then?" Hermione asked her.

"I always break my quills one way or the other and those quills are rather expensive" Tonks said sadly "I bought one once but I broke it after a few hours"

"How did you break it?" Harry asked her curiously.

"Well it could have happened to anyone I guess" Tonks said and sighed "Anyway I really liked that quill, it was really beautiful all fluffy and pink, so I was examining it in the elevator and it was really long so that when the door closed it got stuck between them. I tried to pull

it out, but it wouldn't budge and then someone must have called for the elevator because it started to move upwards and my quill disappeared down. Never saw it again"

Harry had to fight down a laugh he didn't think that anyone else could have lost a quill that way. He saw that Fleur had similar problems because Fleur looked very hard down at her plate with a concentrated expression. Hermione on the other hand looked sympathetic at Tonks.

"Got to go" Tonks said as she glanced down on her watch. "Is my hair alright today?"

Harry hadn't even noticed Tonks hair today, it changed too often to keep up with today it was black and curly.

"Yes" Fleur agreed "but I still think that you looked better in blond hair"

"But that's no fun" Tonks exclaimed "See you later" she pulled out her wand and with a crack she had disappeared.

Hermione had eaten very quickly all breakfast and was done before Harry, she looked at him for a moment as if waiting for him to finish.

"Will you be okay?" She asked him.

"Yeah go read" Harry said and almost at once Hermione stood up and left.

"What's she reading?" Fleur asked him, he knew that Fleur didn't care much what Hermione was reading but that she asked to avoid more difficult subjects, such as Bill.

"Duelling for Masters" Harry stated.

"She got that book?" Fleur asked Harry curiously.

"She gave it to me for my birth day" Harry said "Do you know of it?"

“Yes of course I do” Fleur said dismissingly and then added “she gave you that book for your birthday is she rich or something?”

“No, loads of people collected for it and Remus paid 50 galleons” Harry explained shortly.

“It’s really a great book. Beauxbaton have one copy that Maxime forced me to read before the third task” Fleur explained. Harry now felt the same urge to keep the conversation away from Bill that he knew Fleur felt.

“You know the author was in the Order?” Harry asked her.

“No, I didn’t” Fleur said in fake enthusiasm.

Harry couldn’t think of a way to continue the conversation his brain became fogged with emotions so he sat in silence as did Fleur.

“How did it go?” Harry finally crooked out, what if Fleur would leave him?

“I don’t know” Fleur said sadly.

“You told him?” Harry asked.

“Yeah, I said I loved someone else” She said. Harry felt his insides come to life again as if they had been frozen. He couldn’t help smiling slightly, he knew he was selfish but it couldn’t be helped.

“He walked out?” Harry guessed.

Fleur sighed “Yes” and then Harry could see tears building up in her blue eyes “I really hurt him Harry” Harry leaned over and hugged her at the same moment Mrs Weasley walked into the room.

“Oh” Mrs Weasley said, turned around and left. Harry guessed that Mrs Weasley had gone to see if Bill was all right, and then she would know for sure that Harry had stolen Bill’s girlfriend. But it was a small price to pay considering the circumstances he thought. He wondered if this made them a couple officially now, and then he thought that

Fleur would be an easy target to get to him if it got out that she was his girlfriend.

Bill left that afternoon without saying good-bye to anyone but Ginny. Ginny then informed Ron and Ron informed Hermione who in her turn informed Harry who told Fleur when he had dragged her off to Buckbeak's room for some privacy.

Harry and Fleur finally got together, officially. Hopefully Harry can get some stability in his life now, he will definitely need it.

Please everyone who claims that Harry and Fleur would have had sex in this chapter, remember that Harry is just sixteen. Also Harry is a noble (foolish if you like) Gryffindor. Even though he would love to have sex with Fleur, he wants it to feel completely right (especially as it is his first time) and he certainly does not want Fleur to cry. It is very off putting if your partner cries after all.

So what do you think of Fleur's veela transformation? I am quite happy with the description of it especially the way she is glaring at Harry with one eye instead of two.

Thanks a million for all the wonderful reviews I hope to get... and thanks for just reading even if you don't review.

Also it's quite late as I write this and make the final corrections in the chapter so if you find any grammar mistakes or something else that is wrong please inform me so that I can fix it.

In next chapter ("Hem, Hem") Harry goes back to the ministry to witness of Umbridge's misuse of power.

Chapter 10 Hem, Hem

Fleur cried often in the following days though less and less for every day that went by. Mrs Weasley to Harry's surprise acted as if nothing she was as nice as ever to Harry and Fleur, Harry was very thankful for this he didn't think he could have been able to persuade Fleur to come down to the meals otherwise. Ginny seemed to accept that Harry loved Fleur but she wouldn't say anything more than hello to him, and she would still glare at Fleur especially if Harry wasn't watching. The days with Fleur went past very fast and before Harry knew it, it was the 23rd. He awoke early that morning he couldn't sleep he was too nervous about facing the Wizengamot but he was also curious about what they might say. He knew that many of the members of the Wizengamot had thought that he was mad. He wondered if Fudge would be there and if Fudge would be able to look him in his eyes.

He decided to get a shower in the honour of the day; he walked out of the room and down to the largest bathroom. He swung the door to the bathroom open and got the shock of his life. Someone was already in the bathroom someone with long red hair someone without clothes he couldn't see her face since she had her back turned at him but he knew it was Ginny. As Ginny heard the door open, she spun around and gave a very girlish shriek. Harry stood frozen to the spot, he had never seen anything like this in his entire life, he felt his heart beat painfully in his chest and all his muscles go rigid. It occurred to him more clearly than ever that Ginny was a full-grown woman, and she was beautiful. Harry came back to his senses before Ginny's shriek had died out; he turned around and slammed the door behind him. He could feel his heart still pumping so hard that it hurt him. He practically ran away from the largest bathroom and into the second largest.

As he stood in the shower, he started to wonder what had happened. He had just seen Ginny completely naked, he knew he would never again see Ginny as anyone's little sister. He got back into his room and started to pick out his best school robe, he was not going there the muggle way so he wouldn't have to dress in muggle clothes. It would be fun to face the people who had tried to expel him from Hogwarts in Hogwarts robes. He would enjoy rubbing it in their faces,

he was right and they were wrong. He hoped that Umbridge was there too, he would love to rub it into her toad like face more than anyone else. He tried to flatten his hair but to no success, he finally gave up on it and went down for breakfast. Mrs Weasley and Ginny was the only one there. He blushed furiously at the sight of Ginny, he expected her to blush too but she didn't. Instead, she seemed to enjoy the fact that Harry was blushing and she wasn't.

"Good morning Harry dear" Mrs Weasley said and then as she saw his red facial colour "don't worry; you are not the suspect this time. You are doing them a service by witnessing against her" Mrs Weasley obviously thought that his blush was from pure nervousness. Harry avoided looking at Ginny during breakfast every time he dared to glance at her he could see her naked.

The kitchen door swung open and Albus Dumbledore entered, he was wearing sky-blue robes that matched the colour of his sparkling eyes.

"Dumbledore" Mrs Weasley exclaimed "how nice to see you"

"Good morning Molly, Ginny and Harry" Dumbledore said happily. To Harry's great relief Dumbledore looked him directly in his eyes and it didn't affect him whatsoever.

"Morning Professor" Harry said on his and Ginny's behalf.

"Would you like a cup of tea?" Mrs Weasley offered Dumbledore.

"Don't mind if I do" Dumbledore replied and sat down.

"I saw you managed to burn Mrs Black?" Dumbledore inquired.

"She made the mistake of calling a part veela who just had lost her family a 'filthy half-breed'" Harry explained fondly.

"Yes that would be very fatal indeed" Dumbledore chuckled merrily.

"Do you think we have a chance, sir?" Harry asked his Headmaster after a few moments.

"Yes, I think we do Harry" Dumbledore said thoughtfully. Harry had another question he was dying to ask Dumbledore but he restrained himself for the moment, he had plenty of time during the day to ask Dumbledore what Voldemort was up to.

"I think" Dumbledore said "that we better get going Harry"

"But I don't have to witness until 10:30" Harry said a bit surprised.

"I though you might like to attend the trial?" Dumbledore said.

"I can do that?" Harry asked hopefully.

"Yes, especially as we had no possibility to arrange for you to see Dolores first trial" Dumbledore explained.

"Right" Said Harry, he had wanted to say good-bye to Fleur before he left at that moment the door flung open and Fleur entered.

"Oh, good morning Mr Dumbledore" Fleur said surprised.

"Good morning to you too Miss Delacour" Dumbledore replied and bowed slightly to her from his seat.

There was a moment of silence as Fleur looked questionably at Harry.

"I arrived early to pick up Harry so that he can attend the trial from the beginning" Explained Dumbledore.

"Oh" Said Fleur a bit disappointed Harry knew that she felt very lonely without him.

"Harry you are entitled to bring a relative along as moral support" Dumbledore said seriously but his blue eyes sparkled mischievously.

"Can I bring Fleur?" Harry asked him hopefully, glancing over at Fleur to see if she approved. She smiled at him.

"Yes, I think that would be an excellent idea" Dumbledore exclaimed happily.

At these words Mrs Weasley started buttering toast frantically "You haven't had any breakfast dear and you are as thin as a stick" Mrs Weasley conjured a paper bag and summoned a bottle of pumpkin juice. Fleur conjured a mirror and started to make sure that she was decent. Fleur was as beautiful as ever something about her made her look good in whatever she wore. Today she was wearing a knee long white skirt and a pale pink blouse without sleeves it wasn't really any spectacular clothes just rather common summer clothes but on Fleur it looked as if it was made for her.

"You look fine dear" Mrs Weasley reassured her and handed Fleur the paper bag with her breakfast.

"Thanks, Mrs Weasley" Fleur replied, Harry could tell that she was a little surprised but also very happy that Mrs Weasley cared so much for her.

"Ready" Dumbledore asked and gestured them towards him.

"Yes" Fleur and Harry chorused.

"Good... DISAPPARATE" Dumbledore said. Almost at once Harry felt weightless; he couldn't see anything, everything was very bright or was it black Harry couldn't tell. He seemed to have lost the ability to see. After a few seconds, the fountain with the Wizard, Witch, centaur, goblin and house elf faded in bellow him. He realised that he was flying; no falling he tried to waved his arms out of instinct to land on his feet. He noticed to his horror that he had no arm's to wave with or feet's to land on. He was falling do the ground quickly he was going to crash onto the centaurs back but then something pushed him towards an empty spot of floor next to the fountain.

"APPARATE" Said Dumbledore's voice followed by a "CRACK" He realised that he was standing on his feet's next to the fountain with Dumbledore and Fleur. He stumbled slightly out of pure shock.

"What was that" He exclaimed.

"We just apparated" Dumbledore said.

“All three of us?” Harry asked bewildered, he had never heard that it was possible to apparate other people but then he figured that it wasn’t possible for anyone but Dumbledore.

“Yes” Dumbledore replied “Now let’s go and register your wands” He walked over to the security desk, Harry and Fleur followed. Fleur was looking around as they walked; he couldn’t blame her it really was a splendid hall and even though the fountain didn’t reflect reality it was very well crafted and well worth admiring.

“Professor Dumbledore, what can I do for you” The security officer said happily as he saw them.

“Good Morning Eric, we are here” He gestured towards Fleur and Harry “to attend the trial”

“Oh, right” Eric said he looked over at Harry and Fleur “Step over here and give me your wands” Fleur and Harry obliged and handed their wand to him. Harry noticed that he didn’t bother with the thin golden rod that he had passed up and down in front of Harry last time he was here, maybe it had something to do with Dumbledore’s presence.

“Right” Eric said and looked up at Harry’s scar as he took his wand and then down of Fleur’s body as he took hers.

He put the Harry’s wand on the strange brass instrument and after a few moments, a thin a strip of paper appeared from the base of the instrument.

“Eleven inches, Phoenix core, used for five years, last time you visited the ministry was august the twelfths last year?” He asked Harry.

“Yes” Harry replied. The security officer handed Harry his wand back and then repeated the process with Fleur’s wand.

“Nine and a half inches, veela hair!” The security officer said and raised an eyebrow. Clearly, Harry thought veela hair was very unusual “been in use for eight years?”

“Yes” Fleur answered.

“I see you haven’t got any...” Eric said and then trailed off as Dumbledore waved his wand. Harry saw a silver badge appear on Fleur chest it read ‘Ms Fleur Delacour’ and then in a smaller text ‘Relative to Mr Harry Potter’. He noticed that Fleur was looking on his chest and realized that he had a similar badge; it read ‘Mr Harry Potter Witness’.

“Ah... have a nice day then” Eric said.

“The same to you” Dumbledore replied and stirred them off to the elevators. Loads of people greeted Dumbledore merely. Some people greeted Harry as well and wanted to shake his hand. Fleur too was receiving loads of curious glances especially from the males she looked very irritated.

“What an ugly place this is, have you Englishmen no taste at all?” Fleur asked Harry loudly so that every one could hear her. Harry was shocked by Fleur’s sudden rudeness. She had never been rude to him before. Harry glanced nervously around expecting people to be looking more intently than ever at them but instead he noticed that people started to look away from Fleur with embarrassing expressions only some witches continued to look at them. He understood what Fleur had done, she’d scared them off, Dumbledore must have realised what Fleur had done too because he chuckled merrily.

Harry smiled as they entered a strangely enough empty elevator. Then he realised that they were going down everyone else must be going up to their departments.

Fleur watched the elevator doors close and Harry knew she wondered how Tonks had managed lose a quill by getting it stuck between them. Harry couldn’t help wondering the same thing.

“Are we staying for lunch?” Harry asked he hoped that maybe they could have lunch with Tonks’s but then he realised that he wasn’t supposed to know her and neither was Fleur.

“Yes, I expect the trials will go on the entire day” Dumbledore replied and then he added as if he was reading Harry’s thoughts “Maybe we can get a tour of the auror headquarter I happen to know a very charming girl there called Nymphadora Tonks”

“Oh” Harry replied trying to sound happily surprised.

“That would be great” Fleur said enthusiastically “I’ve never met an auror”

“Yes, so you two got to know each other during the tournament?” Dumbledore asked. Harry knew that he was making sure that Fleur and Harry didn’t say anything about the order.

“Yes, we have been writing ever since” Fleur lied quickly “and now that Harry was going to London he invited me to accompany him”

“How very excellent” Dumbledore said.

“Department of mysteries” The cool female elevator voice said and the elevator came to a halt. Dumbledore gestured them out of the elevator and to follow him.

“We are here in good time” Dumbledore said and then turned to Fleur “You will have time to eat your breakfast”

Dumbledore stopped outside a door that had a sign on it that read ‘Courtroom 8’.

They all sat down on a bench that stood against the wall opposite the door. Fleur started slowly to eat her toasts and drink her juice. After a few moments, Madam Bones came walking down the corridor.

“Ah, Albus how nice to se you” She exclaimed.

“Good morning Amelia, it’s great to see you too, this is Fleur Delacour and Harry Potter” Dumbledore greeted.

“Ah, the Tri Wizard champion from Beauxbaton” Said Madam Bones and shook Fleur’s hand.

“Nice to meet you” Fleur said.

“And Harry Potter” Madam Bones said and shook his hand.

“Hello” Harry replied politely, he liked Madam Bones she had believed him when he had had his disciplinary hearing.

“Shall we get seated then Albus” Madam Bones asked Dumbledore.

They entered courtroom 8 it was much nicer than courtroom 10 it was brightly lit and the stone walls were smooth and polished. There was a chair in the middle of the room, but it didn't have any chains, in fact it was rather comfortable looking. At one side of the room, there was a long table with several chairs behind it and at the other side of the room were several rows of benches. Dumbledore gestured towards these benches and Fleur and Harry sat down at the far end of the front row. Dumbledore and Madam Bones sat down behind the long table. One after one the Wizengamot entered the room and sat down behind the table, some people also sat down on the benches one of them was Remus Lupin.

“Professor Lupin” Harry exclaimed as he saw him. He thought it would be best if he called him Professor Lupin in front of these people.

“Harry” Remus replied and walked over to them shaking his hand.

“Fleur, this is Remus Lupin, Professor this is Fleur Delacour” Harry introduced formally, they greeted each other as if they were complete strangers and Remus sat down next to Harry, they chatted merrily about Harry's third year when Lupin had been Defence against the Dark Arts teacher. After a few moments, Fudge and Percy entered. Harry didn't know what to think about Percy, he knew that Percy had apologized but he seemed as devoted to Fudge as ever. A few moments later Umbridge entered, the room followed by two wizards who Harry figured was her guard. Umbridge sat down in the chair in the middle of the room her face was even paler than usual and she was more toad like than ever. Harry glared at her, she had tried to kill him, she had tortured him and on top of all she had confiscated his Firebolt. She had also tried to arrest Hagrid and almost killed McGonagall. He hated her even more when he realised that three years in Azkaban was much too short especially when there were no

dementors there. Fleur must have seen his furious expression because she grabbed his hand in an attempt to calm him it worked rather well. He felt his urge to curse her vanish and instead he decided to remain calm and do his best to make her look as evil as Voldemort himself. Fudge had just noticed that he was there and turned angrily to Dumbledore.

“What is Potter doing here?” Harry could hear Fudge say to Dumbledore over the noise in the room. Dumbledore opened his mouth to reply but Madam Bones jumped to his defence.

“Mr Potter is here to witness against Umbridge and is present in this room because he is personally involved and there by has the right to attend the entire trial” This shut Fudge up and he sat down in his chair and started to go through some papers. When everyone had settled down on their seats and the noise had died down Fudge rose from his chair.

“Ready, Weasley” Fudge grunted.

“Yes sir” Percy answered enthusiastically. Harry looked over at Percy and to his surprise; Percy met his eyes for a fraction of a second before he looked down on his parchment.

“August the 23rd Misuse of power trial, suspect: Dolores Jane Umbridge” Fudge said loudly and Percy scribbled it down.

“Interrogators: Cornelius Oswald Fudge, Minister for Magic; Amelia Susan Bones, Head of the Department of Magical Law Enforcement” Fudge continued. There were loads of formalities to go through before the first accusation could be made but in the end Madam Bones called the first witness. Someone named Marie Laker a next-door neighbour to Umbridge had been threatened by Umbridge several years ago when she was working for the Department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures. Then some other minor offences, people who had in different ways been threatened or abused because of her position at the ministry. Who ever had done the background research of Umbridge had done a very good job. Harry smiled widely at the way Umbridge turned uncomfortable in her chair.

“Witness number 5 Mr Harry Potter” Madam Bones read from a parchment.

Fudge looked over at Harry angrily “Potter” He snapped it seemed almost as if Fudge blamed Harry for Umbridge’s law braking.

“Pleases stand up” Harry stood up “Are you Harry Potter of number four Privet Drive?”

“Yes” Harry replied.

“You are here today to give evidence regarding Dolores Umbridge eventual misuse of power?” Fudge asked.

“Yes” Harry replied again.

“Very well” said Fudge fighting his temper “how do you know the defendant?”

“She was my defence against the dark arts teacher last year” Harry replied calmly with a teasing smile directed at Fudge. Fudge looked murderous. Madam Bones seemed to sense this because she continued the inquiry.

“We understand that you have a scar” Stated Madam Bones.

“Yes, several” Harry replied and some whispers broke out in the room.

“You claim that the defendant caused one of these” Inquired Madam Bones in an emotionless voice.

“Yes, the one on my hand” He stated and saw to his pleasure that Umbridge turned more uncomfortable then ever in her chair.

“How did you get it?” Madam Bones asked.

“I got it in detention” Harry replied.

“Why did you get a detention?” Madam Bones asked.

“I got the first week for telling Umbridge that Voldemort was back” There was a shutter as Harry said Voldemort’s name.

"I see" said Madam Bones "you got more detentions then that week?"

"Yes, I got one the second week, then one when I gave that interview and a night when I called" He looked strait at Fudge "Malfoy a liar" He omitted Draco's first name on purpose.

"Which Malfoy" Fudge barked irritably as if he had waiting for a chance to criticise Harry in any way.

"I thought you knew the Malfoy's" Harry said as innocently as possible he saw to his satisfaction that Fudge was a fraction away from cursing him "The one at Hogwarts Draco Malfoy" He added before anyone could ask him to answer the question.

"And what did you do to get a scar from the detentions" Madam Bones asked quickly, hoping to calm Fudge down.

"She had me doing lines" Harry replied and again not giving all the information at once.

"You got a scar from doing lines" Fudge said and smiled madly.

"Yes" Harry said.

"You expect us to believe that?" Fudge asked and smiled even more madly.

"Yes" Harry replied.

"And I suppose that you might have a scar for attending this court today?" Fudge asked a few wizard and witches started to murmur in agreement. Clearly everyone was not entirely convinced that Harry sane.

"No I don't think I will" Harry said still very calmly though he felt a bit irritated that some people still thought that he might be crazy.

"Oh, so you only get scars for doing detentions?" Fudge asked him as if Harry was completely mad, the wizards and witches that seemed to agree with Fudge whispered even louder now.

“No” Harry replied calmly, if only Fudge could see the grave he was digging for himself.

“Do you mind showing us your scar” Madam Bones asked a bit irritated, she clearly did not approve of the way Fudge was inquiring Harry.

Harry walked up to her and before he held out his hand to her he said “It’s a bit hard to see” and gestured to her monocle.

“A bit hard to see?” Fudge laughed and was joined by the wizards and witches who had been whispering.

“Yes” Harry replied and smiled slightly at Fudge.

“And why would it be hard to see?” Fudge asked probably hoping that Harry had a wonderful story to tell about it.

“It was almost a year ago I got it” Harry said and then added “And please don’t laugh at me”

Fudge’s expression changed from gleeful to annoyed, in a matter of seconds “Don’t waste our time like this then, I recommend a hundred galleon fine for wasting ministry time and resources. Those in favour”

“A moment” Madam Bones said angrily “Let’s not make any rash decisions”

Harry held up his hand to Madam Bones while she corrected her monocle. Once she was satisfied, she took Harry’s hand. He flexed it so that the scar would show more clearly.

“Hmm, she said” Emotionless and then sighted “Cornelius, you may want to see this”

She let go of Harry’s hand and Harry walked up to the Minister of magic.

“I don’t need to see any thing” Fudge roared “Those in favour of a hundred galleon fine and a warning”

"If I'm not mistaken Cornelius you have no right of disregarding evidence" Dumbledore said warningly.

"Dumbledore... I don't have time for any of this" Fudge said angrily.

"Then I suggest that you name someone to take your place in the Wizengamot who has time" Dumbledore said calmly.

"Take my place, I'm the minister of magic" Fudge exclaimed outraged.

"I am well aware that you are the minister of magic Cornelius" Dumbledore said and nodded towards Fudge.

"Very well, Very Well" Said Fudge trying to calm his temper.

"Potter give me your hand!" He snapped. Harry held out his hand and Fudge grabbed it hard.

"Can't see anything" He exclaimed after half a second and threw Harry's hand back to him.

"Would you like to show me?" Dumbledore asked politely, Harry walked over to Dumbledore and held out his hand. Dumbledore took his hand gently and Harry flexed it so that the text became easier to see.

"Hmm, yes" Said Dumbledore and gave Harry's hand to a blond middle aged witch with a huge hat. She too looked at Harry's hand and Harry could see her eyes reading the text. When she was done she passed Harry's hand along to an old Wizard with dark hair. This process continued. Even the wizards and witches that had laughed at him read what his scar said though no one read aloud. Harry looked over at Fleur she smiled at him and so did Remus. He looked up at Fudge who sat and leaned back in his chair, with a defeated expression on his face. Every now and then, he cast furious glances at Harry and the person who held his hand. When everyone had read his scar Harry walked back to his seat and gave Umbridge a triumphant smile; she glared at him.

"She used a blood quill on you?" Madam Bones asked.

“Yes” Harry replied calmly.

“She forced you to write ‘I must not tell lies’ with it?” Madam Bones asked.

“Yes” He replied and sighed slightly he could remember those nights all too well.

“Why didn’t you contact an adult?”

“For the first I didn’t know those quills were illegal and second I didn’t want anyone to know” Harry explained.

“Why didn’t...”

“Can you prove that Umbridge did this to you” Fudge interrupted Madam Bones.

“Yes” Harry replied “Lee Jordan had detention with her too”

Fudge sighed and leaned back in his chair defeated.

“Very well, are we ready for the next witness?” Madam Bones inquired nobody said anything.

“Good, Mr Weasley would you go and fetch Minerva” Madam Bones commanded. Percy hurried away to the door opened it and a few seconds later Harry’s head of house Minerva McGonagall entered, she wore forest green robes and seemed quite happy to be there.

“Witness number 6 Professor Minerva McGonagall” Madam Bones read from her parchment. Some of the wizards and witches nodded a hello at her, she had probably taught many of them transfiguration.

“Are you Professor Minerva McGonagall of Hogwarts” Madam Bones asked.

“I am” McGonagall replied shortly.

“You are here to testify against Dolores Umbridge”

“I am” McGonagall replied again.

“How do you know the defendant?” Madam Bones asked in a slightly bored voice.

“We both worked at Hogwarts” McGonagall informed them.

“Yes, and we understand that you were injured by her?” Madam Bones asked.

“Yes I was. I was stunned at Umbridge's command” McGonagall told them.

“Any witnesses to this?” Fudge asked her.

“Hem, Hem” Harry cleared his throat in the same way that Umbridge did when she wanted attention. Umbridge turned and glared at him harder than ever, McGonagall looked over to him too and Harry saw that she was fighting down a smile.

“If you don't behave your self Potter I'll have to send you out of this court” Fudge barked at him. Madam Bones looked reprovngly at Fudge.

“Yes Mr Potter?” Madam Bones asked him gently, totally ignoring Fudge.

“I am a witness” Harry said shortly. He could out of the corner of his eye that Umbridge was glaring even harder at him.

“Excellent” Madam Bones said and glared at Fudge “Would you like to tell us what happened?” Harry was almost sure that Madam Bones asked him and not McGonagall to tell what happened to gloss over Fudge's rudeness.

“Well, Umbridge and three others came to arrest Hagrid in his hut one night...”

“Dumbledore let's you run around outside at night?” Fudge interrupted Harry.

"I believe that it is common praxis to take you astronomy OWLs at night" Harry said calmly some of the wizards and witches snorted slightly.

"Anyway" Harry continued "All of a sudden Umbridge and her three friends started to shoot stunners at him. And then Professor McGonagall came running down towards Hagrid's hut yelling at them and asking on what grounds they were attacking Hagrid. The next thing I saw was all four of them stupify Professor McGonagall"

Some wizards and witches gasped.

"Can anyone verify this besides you Potter" Fudge asked in a defeated tone.

"Yes, Professor Hagrid of course and Professor Tofty and the rest of my class" Harry said.

"Hem, Hem" McGonagall cleared her throat Harry was surprised clearly Professor McGonagall detested Umbridge as much as he did, which was saying something since McGonagall barley ever showed any kind of emotions.

"Minerva" Asked Madam Bones gently Umbridge looked more even more furious, she was paler then ever and her mouth thin and wide.

"I can of course verify Mr Potter's testimony myself" McGonagall said sternly.

"Yes of course" Said Madam Bones "Does anyone wish to add anything?"

"Yes" said Umbridge, she hadn't spoken a word until now.

"Go ahead" Said Fudge.

"Hagrid is a known convict. We had to use force to capture him. God knows what he could have done, he is half giant" Umbridge said in a poor attempt at her usual high pitched girlish voice.

Harry felt his vision narrow, he was furious before he knew it he was standing up.

“Harry please sit down” Fleur hissed at him and tried to pull him down but Harry didn’t want to sit down he shrugged her off.

“Yes Mr Potter” Madam Bones said gently before Fudge could bellow at him to sit down.

“Hagrid is innocent” Harry said through gritted teeth.

“Yes, a note will be made that Hagrid is innocent. It was proven by this court. Weasley” Madam Bones commanded. Percy scribbled frantically.

“He is a filthy half-breed” Umbridge shrieked momentarily losing her temper.

“Umbridge please control your temper” Madam Bones snapped “If Hagrid is half giant or not is not an excuse to attack him in the middle of night. Add a note Weasley that the Defendant used the term filthy half-breed to describe a respectable Professor” Harry could tell that Fudge wanted badly to say something but couldn’t think of anything to say so he sat back in his chair. Umbridge glared at Madam Bones but Madam Bones didn’t seem to notice.

“Does anyone wish to add anything else?” Nobody said anything
“Good time is now... 11:35 court is to gather here again let’s say at two sharp so that we all have plenty of time to make up our minds. Dismissed”

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

So what do you think, they are out of Grimmauld Place at last even if it just is for the day. I made Minerva a bit more evil then usual but we have to remember that now she knows that Dolores sent Dementors after one of her Gryffindors!

Please... R... never mind do as you wish ;)

Chapter 11 Auror saint

The room filled with noises made from people rummaging for papers and chair being pushed back. Harry stood up and made for the door together with Fleur and Remus they were among the first to get out and decided to sit down on the bench to wait for Dumbledore.

“So how did it go?” Harry asked Remus, he thought it went very good but he wanted to hear what Remus had to say about it.

“It went very well for our cause” Remus said and then added in a slightly concerned voice “you shouldn’t have teased Fudge like that”

“He did it to himself” Harry exclaimed angrily.

“Harry I told you before I knew your parents very well especially your father. James would have done the same thing, and Sirius would have laughed his head off afterwards” Remus said dreamily but then seemed to snap back to reality “It was not a good thing to show up in Hogwarts robes or to suggest that Fudge knows the Malfoys”

“Why not” Harry asked irritably.

“He is the minister of magic” Fleur reminded him.

“So” Harry asked.

“It is not a good thing if the minister hates you” Fleur told him. “He can cause trouble”

Remus nodded slightly in agreement with Fleur and Harry didn’t argue. Most people had left courtroom eight by now some had nodded politely to Harry others had ignored them. Umbridge left followed by her guard she ignored them completely. A few moments later the door swung open again and a livid Fudge left he too ignored them completely. Finally the door swung open one last time and Madam Bones left together with Dumbledore.

“Ah, Mr Potter” Madam Bones said as she saw him and then added “I apologize for Fudge behaviour, it was quite unworthy the minister”

"No harm done" Harry replied and then added "thanks to you"

"Well if there is any thing the ministry can do" Madam Bones asked.

"I don't think there..." Harry said thinking fast, the ministry could do a lot of things and somehow he thought of Arthur Weasley "You could give Arthur Weasley a window"

Dumbledore chuckled slightly in surprise behind Madam Bones back.

"Arthur Weasley?" Madam Bones asked raising an eyebrow.

"Yeah, he has always been nice to me, and his office is really tiny as it is" Harry explained.

Madam Bones smiled "Yes, I think we can manage it"

"But don't tell him I had anything to do with it" Harry said "Tell him that it was about time instead or something" He didn't want Mr Weasley to know that he had been able to get him a window after just a few hours at the ministry when Mr Weasley had worked there for ages.

"Very well" Madam Bones said and eyed him curiously.

"Lets get something to eat" Dumbledore said "are they still serving asparagus across the street?"

They took the elevators up to the entrance hall. Harry gathered that it was a wizard restaurant across the street called "Three dragons" that served, according to Dumbledore, excellent asparagus.

"I think we better apparate" Dumbledore said when they stood next to the fountain "Remus, why don't you go first" Remus nodded and with a crack disappeared.

"Madam Bones?" Dumbledore asked and she too disappeared with another crack.

"Ready?" Dumbledore asked Fleur and Harry they nodded.

"DISAPPARATE" Harry heard Dumbledore said firmly. He felt weightless again and he lost his ability to see. After a fraction of a

second he could see again. He saw a large room full of Wizards and Witches sitting at round tables eating lunch.

“APPARATE” Dumbledore said firmly and a loud “CRACK” followed. He was standing he realised next to Fleur and Dumbledore just inside the door of the restaurant.

“Professor Dumbledore” Exclaimed a waiter happily and walked over to them. Harry now noticed that Remus and Madam Bones were standing a few feet away from them.

“Thomas how nice to see you” Dumbledore replied merrily.

“It’s great to see you too. We have some excellent asparagus today, picked this very morning” Thomas said happily and started to look over at Harry and Fleur curiously.

“This is Fleur Delacour, Harry Potter, Remus Lupin and you already know Madam Bones” Dumbledore introduced them “This is Thomas Flamel”

They all shook hands and was guided to a table in the back of the room where they could talk undisturbed. Harry let Fleur decide what to order since he couldn’t make up his mind and because he really had no idea what the different things on the menu were.

“So how can you apparate other people” Fleur asked Dumbledore as they ate.

“First of all you have to be so far out of your mind” Dumbledore joked “that you easily can imagine other peoples as a part of your body”

“Oh, and then you just apparate as usual?” Fleur assumed.

“Yes” Dumbledore said “Amazing what they do to this asparagus” Harry couldn’t taste what was so amazing about the asparagus; it was rather good but certainly not amazing.

“So you got your OWLs back?” Madam Bones asked.

“Yes, they were okay, with some luck I can become an auror” Harry said rather proudly.

Madam Bones looked at him for a moment sizing him up “I think that would suit you well, especially as you already knew how to conjure a patronus and fight the imperius”

“How did you know about the imperius?” Harry asked surprised.

“We had to investigate the death of Cedrik Diggory and in doing so we found records of every student that could withstand the imperius curse” Madam Bones explained.

“Oh” Harry replied.

“You never told me you could throw off the curse” Fleur asked mildly surprised.

“Sorry” Harry apologized.

“No, I didn’t tell you either” Fleur said with a guilty smile “I can throw it off too”

“That’s great” Harry exclaimed.

They talked happily about every thing not serious while they ate, when they were done Madam Bones told them that she really needed to get back to the Ministry. She charged their lunch on the ministry and left.

“I better get working too” Remus said and pulled out several rolls of parchment. Harry looked questionably at him he was not sure if he was allowed to ask.

“Remus is the one responsible for the excellent background search of Dolores Umbridge” Dumbledore explained.

“Yes, and I need to prove that the laws Dolores Umbridge created regarding werewolf is another error of judgment. But it should not be any problem, not since she called Hagrid a ‘Filthy Half-Breed’” Remus explained.

"We'll leave you too it, I promised to introduce Harry here to Nymphadora Tonks" Dumbledore said with twinkling eyes.

"Oh, the Metamorphmagus?" Remus asked innocently.

"The very same, we'll see you later" Dumbledore said and got up. Harry and Fleur said goodbye to Remus and followed Dumbledore over to the entrée.

"Ready?" Dumbledore asked.

"Yes" Harry and Fleur chorused.

For the third time this day Harry felt the sensation of apparating, and for the second time he fell towards the statue in the entrance hall of the ministry of magic. When he had landed safely, they took an elevator up to level two.

"Level Two, Department of Magical Law Enforcement, including the Improper Use of Magic Office, Auror Headquarters and Wizengamot Administration Services" Said the elevator voice as the door opened a few aeroplanes fluttered out of the elevator along them. Dumbledore led them along the corridor that Harry had walked a year ago with Mr Weasley; they turned a corner and entered a huge hall through a pair of heavy oak doors. The hall was filled with cubicles. On the closest cubicle hang a sign that said 'Auror Headquarters'. The mood in the hall was very stressed. Harry could hear several witches and wizards shouting at each other at the top of their voices and messages were zooming around almost as if it was snowing. There were loads of parchments littering the floor, and even some quills here and there.

"Are you sure that a tour would be a good idea today?" Harry asked Dumbledore nervously.

"Yes, I do. If you choose this as your profession you have the right to know what it is like" Dumbledore stated firmly and walked in among the cubicles. Once people saw Dumbledore they became quiet, it was almost as if Dumbledore was some kind of auror saint. Dumbledore stopped in front of a desk with a violently green haired witch, she sat with her head bent over a piece of parchment writing. She did not

notice Dumbledore at once when they got there but she seemed to notice that someone had stopped in front of her desk and looked up.

"Dumbledore" Tonks exclaimed happily and stood up and in the process knocking her chair over. Tonks spun around quickly to pick up her chair and in the process bumping her lower back into her desk, which shook so violently that her ink well tumbled over and drenched her parchment in ink.

"Not again!" Tonks wailed and seemed close to a nervous breakdown. Dumbledore drew his wand and waved at the drenched parchment. At first nothing happened but then the ink on the parchment started to pour back in the ink well and when all ink was back in the ink bottle it stood up again, as if it was a movie played backwards.

"That was a tempus spell" Said Fleur with wide open eyes.

"Thanks a million Professor Dumbledore" Tonks exclaimed happily.

"Oh don't thank me it's my fault you knocked it over in the first place" Dumbledore said with a smile. "I'm here today to ask you if you can guide Harry Potter and Fleur Delacour through the department."

"The Harry Potter?" Tonks said in mock surprise and started to goggle at his scar "The-boy-who-lived?" Harry knew she was teasing him.

"Yes, Harry, Fleur this is Nymphadora Tonks" Dumbledore said merrily.

"Oh, mind if I call you Nymphadora?" Harry asked innocently and then added "you can call me Harry" Harry knew Tonks hated to be called Nymphadora almost as much as he hated to be called the-boy-who-lived.

"Yeah, you can call me Fleur, Nymphadora" Fleur said also very innocently.

"Well you seem to be getting along fine" Dumbledore said "We'll meet down in courtroom eight at two?"

“That will be fine” Harry and Fleur chorused.

“I trust you’ll see that they make it there safe” Dumbledore asked Tonks in a commanding tone of voice.

“Yes of course Professor Dumbledore” Tonks replied and Dumbledore left.

“Are you an auror Nymphadora?” Harry asked innocently.

“Yes I am Mr Potter” Tonks replied curtly.

“And please call me Tonks it’s shorter” Tonks replied sweetly.

They had a very enjoyable tour of the aurors’ headquarter every one managed at least a quick hello even though they very busy. Harry and Fleur teased Tonks about her name and Tonks in her turn teased them. A lot of cubicles were empty since most of the aurors were on missions or on guard duty among them was Kingsley. When they had finished their tour, Harry decided that they should go and visit Mr Weasley briefly. They walked away from the aurors headquarter towards the Misuse of Muggle Artefacts office.

Harry knocked on the door and after a few moments, the door swung open. Harry was met by a faint breeze and a beaming Mr Weasley.

“Oh Harry, it’s great to see you” Mr Weasley said happily “You too Tonks”

“Mr Weasley I don’t know if you met Fleur Delacour” Harry said politely.

“No, I don’t believe I have” Mr Weasley said and shook Fleur’s hand “Hello Miss Delacour”

“Nice to meet you Mr Weasley” Fleur said courteously.

“Step inside, step inside” Mr Weasley said happily “We just got a window installed, after 15 year in this office they seemed that today was the day to install a window. Said we had it coming” That was fast Harry thought.

"That's great" Tonks said and Harry noticed that the faint breeze he had felt was from the window.

"I didn't know you could open them" Harry asked a bit surprised.

"Well most of them you can't but this is the new kind" Mr Weasley explained happily "Wonder if Perkins will believe me when I tell him"

"So, Harry how is the trial going?" Mr Weasley asked curiously.

"Great Umbridge called Hagrid a filthy Half-Breed" Harry said with a grin.

"She sad that?" Mr Weasley replied happily.

"Yeah" Fleur said and then lowered her voice "but that's nothing to what Harry did to Fudge"

"Really Harry?" Mr Weasley asked "You will have to tell us all about it later"

They had fun in Mr Weasley's office he told them a very funny story about an old witch that had bought a muggle telephone and charmed it to talk back to her since she didn't have any muggle friends to call. All too soon in Harry's opinion was it time to go back down to courtroom eight. Harry and Fleur said good-bye to Tonks and Mr Weasley and entered courtroom eight. The first thing Harry noticed as he enter the room was that the chair Umbridge had sit in was gone, the second was that even more witches and wizards then before was inside the room. Harry found Remus holding their old seats for them and walked over to him with Fleur.

"Hi" Harry said.

"Oh, hello Harry, Fleur. You better take your seat or some one might steal them" Remus said.

"How come there are so much people here" Fleur asked Remus.

"Werewolves most of them, some of them are here to testify others are here as moral support" Remus explained. Harry was shocked, he

had never before even considered the fact that there were female werewolves and much less girls in Fleur's age. He recognized a girl that had been a Ravenclaw five or six years above him. Apparently, werewolves were much more common than most people believed.

"Order" Fudge barked after a few moments, the room fell silent.

"Potter" Fudge said angrily "You are not supposed to be here, you are not a witness"

"Minister" Remus said carefully.

"Yes what is it Lupin" Fudge asked irritably.

"Mr Potter is here as my moral support" Remus said softly, he wondered how Remus would explain Fleur's presence, but Fudge didn't seem to mind Fleur's presence. Probably because of her veela charm Harry thought.

"Very well" said Fudge and sighted "Those who believe that Dolores Umbridge is guilty of misusing her position at the ministry raise your hand" Most of the wizards and witches in the Wizengamot raised a hand and Harry could here Remus take a breath of relief.

"Very well" Said Fudge who had been one of those that didn't raise his hand "Dolores Umbridge is hereby considered guilty of misusing her position in the ministry of magic at several occasions. Whether or whether not to press charges against Dolores Umbridge will be determined at a later date"

"Afternoon 23rd of August. Law regulation regarding the werewolf laws 1205, 1206 and 1207" Fudge said and Percy scribbled it down eagerly.

The process of law regulation was boring Harry found after a few minutes and started to play hangman with Fleur. It was much easier to figure out the words that Fleur set up and much harder to come up with words that she wouldn't figure out then when he played with Ron. He realized that he not only felt closer to Fleur he was closer, his mind worked much more like Fleur's. He had to bite his hand not to start snigger when he realised Fleur's word was 'Umbridge'.

They stopped playing after a while when Remus was asked to make his speech. Remus held a long speech about how hard it was to find a job because the employer was forced to be a legitimated to handle werewolves even if they was no where near work at full moon. And that many werewolves had to get jobs in the muggle world instead and finally that some werewolves felt betrayed by the wizarding world and was tempted to join Voldemort. A murmur of whispers broke up when Remus sat down again. Harry thought he had argued his case very well. He looked up at Fudge and saw that he was behaving much better against Remus then he had against Harry, Madam Bones seemed to think so too because she was now whispering with Fudge. Madam Bones called several witnesses who told pretty much the same thing that they had had good jobs and but that they had been forced to quit when the laws that Umbridge proposed went through. After what seemed like several hours, the Wizengamot was ready to make their decision.

“Those in favour for the removal of the werewolf laws 1205, 1206 and 1207” Fudge asked and to Harry’s surprise Fudge raised his hand. Almost every wizard and witch raised their right hand, and the werewolves in the room applauded. Harry and Fleur joined them and Remus looked very proud. A few moments later Madam Bones dismissed them and they left the room. Harry, Remus and Fleur once more waited out side for Dumbledore. Several werewolves demanded that Remus should have a glass with them over at the three dragons and it was agreed that all werewolves would celebrate there. A few moments later Madam Bones and Dumbledore exited Courtroom 8.

“Thanks for the Window” Harry said when Madam Bones caught his eye.

“Arthur should have had a window a long time ago, he has earned it many times over” Madam Bones replied.

“Well thanks anyway” Harry said.

“If there is anything else just ask” Madam Bones said.

“Thanks” Replied Harry.

“Hopefully I will see you as an auror apprentice, in a few years. It’s been nice to meet you Fleur. Dumbledore I expect to see you soon” Madam Bones said and walked away.

“Remus and the rest of the werewolves are going to celebrate” Harry told Dumbledore hopefully, he had no greater urge to get back to Grimmauld place yet.

“I’m sorry Harry, but I am afraid you will have to skip that” Harry wanted to argue but he didn’t dare since he was in public and couldn’t let anything about the order slip.

“Right see you later Remus” Harry said grumpily.

“See you later” Remus replied and walked off with his werewolf friends. He felt Fleur grab his hand and he felt some of his worries disappear. It always felt very nice to have skin contact with Fleur; he sighted and felt the last bit of anger fade. They walked in silence back to the elevators took them up to the atrium and walked over to the fountain. Dumbledore apparated them back to the entrée of Grimmauld and they walked down to the kitchens.

“Oh... How good to see that your back” Mrs Weasley said as they entered. Harry saw that Ron, Hermione and Ginny were helping with dinner. He blushed when he saw Ginny he couldn’t help it, he somehow couldn’t get rid of the image of her naked. When Mrs Weasley’s words reached Ron, Hermione and Ginny’s ears, they turned over and looked expectantly at them.

“The laws were lifted” Dumbledore said.

Arthur finally got a window, Hurray!

Next chapter “Defence against the dark arts” is the last chapter before Hogwarts.

Review if you like!

Chapter 12 Defence Against the Dark Arts

“That’s wonderful, let’s have a little celebration” Mrs Weasley exclaimed.

“Why don’t you help Ron to set the table, Harry” Mrs Weasley said firmly and glanced over at Ron. Harry didn’t want anything to with Ron, but Mrs Weasley had told him so firmly that he didn’t dare to object. He walked over to the cupboard where Ron was already counting plates.

Ron looked down on his hands and sighted “Look Harry, mum, Hermione and Ginny kind of beat some sense in me to day” Harry looked over at the women in question and saw that they all looked at them expectantly but turned away as soon as they realised that Harry glanced back at them.

“I was just angry because of Ginny...” Ron said and Harry realised that he was about to apologize. Harry found that he didn’t want to hear it. They were too good friends deep down that an official apology would never mean anything, in fact Harry realised it would almost be an insult to their friendship if they needed to apologize to each other.

“I don’t blame you I haven’t been very nice to Ginny” Harry interrupted.

“Yeah, well anyway” Ron said “I was stupid and I’m...”

“Forget it” Harry interrupted again.

Ron seemed a little relived by this “But I really have too”

“No you don’t. Well maybe to Fleur” Harry replied.

“No you don’t get it, I really, really have too” Ron said with a small smile.

“Why?” Harry asked. Something about Ron’s smile made Harry think that Ron had something funny to say.

“Well it’s beside the point really, but if you have to know” Ron said with an apologetic smile “Hermione and Ginny have stolen my broom and won’t tell where it is unless I do”

Harry started to laugh it was somehow so typical Ron after a few moments Ron started to laugh too and every thing was just as usual between them.

“We’ll just have to figure out where they have hidden it then” Harry said with a smile.

“Yeah” Ron agreed “Bet it’s somewhere clever if Hermione hid it”

“Maybe a small dose of Lying Liquorice would do the trick” Harry said and grinned evilly “After all she can’t very well blame me can she”

“You got some then?” Ron asked “You got our last one”

“Yeah, in my trunk” Harry replied “Let’s hurry and put some in Hermione’s glass”

“Good, tell mum you are going to change into muggle clothes” Ron said grinning in the same way the twins usually grinned.

“Right” Harry replied and a minute later, he was back in muggle clothes and with his box of Lying Liquorice in his pocket. Harry put half a pastille in Hermione’s glass. He crushed it first so that it would mix with what ever she drank. When they had set the table, Mrs Weasley started filling the table with pots and pans full of the most delicious food. Hermione and Ginny hanged a banner over the table that Mrs Weasley had conjured and charmed so that it said ‘Congratulations Remus and welcome to the Order Fleur’. Dumbledore and Fleur were discussing something in a corner of the room, Harry couldn’t hear what but he guessed that it was about the Order. The doorbell rang distantly and Mrs Weasley told Ginny to keep an eye on the stove and make sure that nothing burned while she opened the door. A few moments later, the kitchen door opened and almost every order member Harry had ever seen entered. In fact, the only one missing seemed to be Bill, Hagrid, Kingsly, Snape and McGonagall. They all sat down at the long table and begun eating.

Ron and Harry eyed Hermione carefully, as she took a gulp of Butterbeer from her glass, but then almost at once she put her glass down and looked at it curiously. She looked up at Harry and Ron with a surprised expression and then she seemed to realize that they had poisoned her and looked a little angry.

"Taste all right" Asked Ron innocently.

Hermione's angry expression vanished to be replaced by a slightly confused "Yes, of course" Hermione lied and after a moment her angry expression came back.

"Good" Harry said "would you mind if we asked you a question then?"

"No not at all" Hermione lied "why would I?"

"Where haven't you hidden my broom from me?" Ron asked happily.

"In your room" Hermione said as if the idea was ludicrous.

"You aren't too mad at us for the moment are you?" Harry asked carefully.

"Only slightly, it would have been much worse if I actually had been poisoned for more then 5 seconds" Hermione said. Harry and Ron exchanged confused looks.

"I don't know what you expected really, I only drank one gulp" Hermione explained.

"Will you please take another gulp then?" Ron joked lamely.

"You are lucky you two just made up" Hermione said dangerously.

"...And then Harry tells Fudge innocently that he thought that Fudge knew the Malfoy's" Harry heard Fleur tell Tonks and Mr Weasley who started to laugh.

"Lucius brother" Said Mundungus who was sitting nearby and seemed to come alive suddenly "Zabulus Malfoy was down Knockturn Alley the other day"

"I didn't know there were two of them" Ginny exclaimed.

"Yes, I'm afraid there are" Said Mr Weasley gravely "They don't really get along. Lucius doesn't approve of Zabulus's way of life"

"He's a blood traitor?" Ron asked incredulously.

"No" Answered Mundungus "he robs muggles"

"Why doesn't Lucius like that?" asked Ron curiously.

"He thinks it spots the family name to be a common thief" Mr Weasley replied.

"Can't you arrest him?" Hermione asked.

Mr Weasley sighed "He's as slippery as his brother, but he will make a mistake one day"

"Did you really tell Fudge that" Hermione asked Harry after a few moments.

"You did didn't you" Ron asked and burst out laughing. Hermione couldn't help smiling even though it was quite clear she didn't approve.

"But that's not the best of it" Harry explained quickly "McGonagall cleared her throat to get attention right in front of Umbridge"

"What?" Ron and Hermione asked with wide eyes.

"Yeah" Harry said and then imitated Umbridge's "Hem, Hem"

"Are you serious?" Ron asked grinning widely.

"You are talking about Professor McGonagall?" Hermione asked in disbelief.

"Yes" Harry confirmed and Ron burst out laughing so badly that members of the order turned to look at him. Hermione too looked as if she wanted to laugh but would not allow herself, and without thinking, she took another gulp of her Butterbeer, which caused Harry to start

laughing as badly as Ron. Hermione looked sternly at them for a moment before she too had to laugh.

“What’s so funny?” Tonks asked over the table she was sitting next to Dumbledore who also looked eager for an explanation.

“Well it’s really not that funny unless you know Umbridge” Harry explained and with help of Ron he told the rest of the story.

“Lying Liquorice?” Dumbledore asked with a glint of mischief in his eyes “Is it a Zonko product?”

“A Zonko product” George said disbelievingly from down the table.

“The greatest invention since wands a Zonko product” Fred said in the same tune. Dumbledore chuckled gently and winked at Harry, Ron and Hermione. Harry knew at once that he had bated the twins.

“Can it perhaps be a Weasley's Wizard Wheezes then” Dumbledore asked politely.

“Of course it is” Said George and banished a box of Lying Liquorice to Dumbledore.

“My dear brother Aberforth happens to love Liquorice” Dumbledore told the twins who grinned widely “How much is this?”

“354 galleons and 14 knuts” Fred replied seriously.

“But we can’t charge you for the noble cause of poisoning your own brother” George continued.

The dinner continued happily, no one had any energy or emotions to spare to be unhappy. Harry knew that the Order members worked very hard to manage their ordinary jobs and at the same time do missions for the Order. When they were all done eating and just sat back in their chairs chatting happily Dumbledore stood up.

“As you all know we have by to night a new member in the Order of the Phoenix” Dumbledore said and gestured for Fleur to stand up “Miss Fleur Delacour” Every one clapped their hands.

"I am pleased to inform the Hogwarts students here that she will be teaching Defence against the dark art at Hogwarts this year together with Nymphadora Tonks" Dumbledore announced happily. There was another round of applause. Harry was stunned he had not expected this, Fleur and Tonks were going with him to Hogwarts. He caught Fleur's eye and they beamed at each other.

"Now I'm afraid I will have to ask the underage wizards to leave" Dumbledore said apologetically. Harry knew that they were going to discuss order business and that there were no point arguing. He, Ron, Hermione and Ginny walked reluctantly up to their room. Harry found that he still had to blush every time he saw Ginny, so he avoided looking at her. They all entered Harry's and Ron's bedroom and Ron started to look for his broom.

"You did put it in here?" Ron asked Hermione and Ginny as he looked under Harry's bed.

"Ask no questions and be told no lies dear brother" Ginny replied teasingly.

"Thank god you are my only sister" Ron said exasperated now looking behind the desk.

"Well, if you really want to know it wasn't Ginny that hid your broom" Hermione said teasingly.

"Thank god you are my only girlfriend" Ron replied and looked straight at Hermione.

"Yeah" Hermione said daringly.

"That's it I'm going to bed!" Ginny said and left the room.

"Me too" said Hermione and kissed Ron on his mouth briefly and left.

Harry changed in to his pyjamas and went to bed.

"Found it" Ron exclaimed suddenly he too had changed in to his pyjamas and was about to go to bed.

“What?” Harry asked and sat up.

“My Broom” Ron said and held up his Cleansweep Eleven “Hermione put it in my bed”

“So what do you think of our Defence against the dark arts teachers” Harry asked.

“Tonks is great, and I bet no boy will ever forget to do his homework if Fleur is correcting it” Ron replied as he got into bed.

“Yeah” Harry agreed, he was sleepily looking up at the ceiling “Night Ron”

“Night” Ron replied and yawned.

The following days past by fast, Fleur and Tonks spent all their free times trying determining what books to assign the different years luckily Remus and Hermione helped them with this. A few days later at breakfast, their annual Hogwarts letter arrived. It was the same as ever, telling them to take the Hogwarts Express from platform 9¾ at eleven September the 1st. He glanced at his book list. It was not the same as usual.

The classes you are entitled to take are.

Care of Magical Creatures Befriending beasts

Charms Standard Book of spells NEWT edition

Defence Against the Dark Arts Fighting back the Dark Arts

Potions Nasty Potions on Life and Death

Transfiguration Conjuring, Vanishing and Transfiguring

As your career advisor, I recommend you take all of these. The signup for these classes will be held in the great hall September the second.

Minerva McGonagall

Deputy Headmistress

Harry looked up from his letter, Ron was still reading his and so was Ginny she had a huge smile on her face.

“Prefect!” Hermione shrieked from behind Ginny, she had finished reading her letter first and was now reading Ginny’s over her back.

“Ginny” Mrs Weasley exclaimed and covered her mouth with her hands as if she didn’t dare to hope.

Ginny pulled out a red and golden prefect’s badge from the envelope and Mrs Weasley stood up.

“Oh, I’m so proud Ginny fifth prefect in the family” Mr Weasley said as she ran over to hug and kiss her “What will it be then? An owl or a cat? You always loved cats”

“Can I have a new broom?” Ginny asked uncertainly “Like the one Ron got”

“Oh, yes of course you can” Mrs Weasley said “I will be going to Diagon Alley as soon as Remus gets here”

“Thanks mum” Ginny exclaimed with a wide smile.

“So what classes will you be taking Hermione?” Ron asked.

“I really don’t know I can’t bear to miss any of them and I can’t take everyone of them unless I ask McGonagall for a time turner” Hermione said sadly.

Harry had told Fleur all about Hermione’s time turner and Sirius. In fact he had told her almost everything about himself.

Harry reached across and grabbed Hermione’s booklist

The classes you are entitled to take are.

Ancient Runes Complete Dictionary of Decrypted Runes
Arithmancy Patterns of Magic
Astronomy The universal guide to the Universe

Care of Magical Creatures Befriending beast
Charms Standard Book of spells NEWT edition
Defence Against the Dark Arts Fighting back the Dark Arts
Herbology Magical Plants of earth
History of Magic The great book of History
Potions Nasty Potions on Life and Death
Transfiguration Conjuring, Vanishing and Transfiguring

The signup for these classes will be held in the great hall September the second.

“You didn’t get an advice” Harry stated.

“No, but it wouldn’t do any good any way” Hermione said sadly.

“Well you are going to take the same subjects as us right?” Ron asked as he read Hermione’s booklist.

“Yes”

“That leaves Ancient Runes, Arithmancy, Astronomy, Herbology and History of Magic” Ron said as he read the paper.

“But I can’t live without any of those” Hermione said and took the book list from Ron as if to find a subject that she didn’t like.

“You like Arithmancy more then the others and you always seemed to enjoy Herbology” Ron told her.

“What about History of Magic and Astronomy and Ancient Runes” Hermione shrieked.

“But those aren’t really useful are they” Ron stated.

“Not useful!” Hermione shrieked even louder.

“Calm down” Ginny said softly “You can always study them after Hogwarts”

“Yeah” Tonks agreed “It’s only school”

“Only school? It’s my future” Hermione said angrily.

"The school is your future? You finish it in two years!" Fleur said her temper flaring. Fleur's temper often flared over stupid things and she apologized almost as much as Tonks did.

"That's not what I meant" Hermione snapped furiously.

"That's exactly what you meant" Fleur snapped back. Harry thought that Fleur had a point Hermione could always study after school if she felt that she had missed something. Hermione didn't respond she sat quietly on her seat her face red with anger. No body dared say anything.

"Fine" Hermione finally said "I won't take Astronomy or Ancient Runes"

Fleur and Tonks planned the Defence against the dark arts lessons the following days with some help from Harry and much too soon for Fleur's and Tonks's liking it was the 1 September. As usual, it was chaos. Hermione had finally acquired too many books to fit in her trunk fortunately Ginny agreed to take some of them in her trunk. Mad eye Moody would like last year take care of the luggage while Mr and Mrs Weasley, Remus, Tonks and Fleur would act as Harry's guard.

Harry couldn't help feeling a little sad as they walked towards kings cross. Sirius had been so happy one year ago running around in his dog form. It was unbelievable that it had only gone one year so much had happened, he didn't even love Fleur then and he felt like he had loved her for all his life. Fleur grabbed his hand she always seemed to sense his emotions. It would have been scary if it had been anyone but Fleur Harry thought and squeezed her hand tightly. They walked in silence to the station. He noticed that everyone especially Mr Weasley, Remus and Tonks were scanning the peoples they passed frantically. They arrived Kings cross without any trouble and walked through the barrier between platforms nine and ten when no muggle was watching.

"Now take care" Mrs Weasley told them and then added warningly "And no adventures"

Harry felt guilty he endangered her children. Mrs Weasley started hugging them all fiercely as if she might not see them again.

“Promise me Harry” Mrs Weasley said sternly as she hugged him
“Don’t leave Hogwarts”

“I won’t” Harry said comfortingly.

“Promise me” Mrs Weasley said as she pulled away from him.

“I promise” Harry promised though he wasn’t quite honest, things often tended to happen that he had no control over.

“Good” Mrs Weasley said and hugged Hermione and then starting on Ginny again.

“You keep your eyes open Potter” Growled Moody “and don’t leave Hogwarts”

“I won’t” Harry replied and turned to Remus who was standing beside him.

“Take care now Harry” Remus said and hugged him shortly.

“I will” Harry replied at the same time the train whistle sounded.

“Hurry up all” Mrs Weasley said and started another round of hugs
“Don’t let anything happen to you”

Harry shook Mr Weasley’s hand and boarded the train. Tonks and Fleur had already found a compartment in the back of the last wagon. They filled the compartment up completely. They were after all six people plus Crookshanks and Pigwidgeon. As the train slowly pulled away from the platform, they waved a final goodbye to Mr and Mrs Weasley, Remus and Moody.

oooooooooooooooooooooooo

Who would have guessed Tonks and Fleur teaching defence against the dark art?

Please review!

Chapter 13 Malfoy and Malfoy

"Got to go" Ron said gesturing to his prefect badge.

"Right" Harry replied he couldn't help to feel a little disappointed. This was perhaps the biggest downside with Ron being a prefect.

"See you in a bit" Ron said and left the compartment with Hermione and Ginny.

"This is so wonderful" Tonks exclaimed as she was watching the outskirts of London passing by the window "I never thought I would do this again"

"So why did you accept?" Harry asked Tonks "Ron told me that you said you would only end up in detention"

"Yeah, I will" Tonks joked "But now I wont have to be in detention alone" She added and smiled at Fleur.

"You wish" Fleur replied smilingly.

"Yeah" Tonks replied "Filch is going to have our skin"

"Why mine?" Fleur asked a bit confused.

"Well I can't really sneak around as a Slytherin at night now that I am a teacher. It would be unfair" Tonks said with a very wicked grin and then after a moment of what looked liked pained concentration Tonks turned into an almost identical copy of Fleur.

"Oh Harry I love you so much" Tonks said in a poor attempt of Fleur France accent.

"Stop it" Fleur said trying to keep herself from giggling.

"You do realise that the teachers are allowed to wander the corridors at night" Harry said.

"Do you think that will stop Filch?" Tonks asked raising an eyebrow doubtfully.

“Yeah why wouldn’t it?” Harry asked.

“Are you kidding, he’s a mad old wizard” Tonks said.

“He isn’t a wizard you know” Harry said with a smile “He’s a squib”

“Are you sure” Tonks said, she looked as if Christmas had come early.

“Yepp” Harry replied.

“So that’s why he’s cleaning without magic” Tonks said “I always thought he liked to do it the muggle way so that he could feel extra miserable”

“If you walk around like that during night I’m going to give you a detention” Fleur stated.

“Oh, yeah” Tonks said and closed her eyes in a pained expression and as she did so her face covered in small red spots that looked as pimples and her nose transformed to a pig snout. Tonks still looked like Fleur and if anyone saw her they would think it was Fleur.

“This better?” Tonks asked with a wicked grin. Harry couldn’t help laughing, and at first Fleur glared at him for this but then she started to laugh too.

“What if I won’t let you roam the corridors at night by yourself?” Fleur asked.

“Haven’t thought about that” Tonks said “But I don’t think Filch would dare to be too nasty if you walked with me at lest not after you go feathery on him”

“How do you know that I will go feathery on him?” Fleur asked.

“Because if you go feathery at me for stupid stuff, you’re going to flame him” Tonks explained. Harry thought that Tonks might be right. Fleur could get very angry over small stuff she had turned into a bird on both Hermione’s and Remus’s behalf when they argued over the book lists. Fleur had apologized for days after that even if Hermione and Remus forgave her at once. Tonks turned back into herself when

the food trolley arrived. Harry insisted that it was a tradition that he paid for it and that it was a way of celebrating that he wasn't relying on the Dursleys. Harry soon understood how Hermione had felt sometimes in his and Ron's company, Fleur and Tonks were giggling a lot as they tried out different hairstyles on each other. Harry soon got enough and started to read Dueling for Masters he had almost finished offensive dueling by now. He had like Hermione, not been able to ignore the unforgivables and he had read the pages about them as carefully as the rest of the book. Ron, Hermione and Ginny arrived back a while later, Ron looked exhausted and sunk down next to Harry after a short glance over at the older girls hairstyles. Harry handed him a Butterbeer that Ron drank in a couple of gulps.

"Oh, I can't wait to take house points" Ginny said with an evil grin. Hermione looked scandalised at this statement.

"You shouldn't enjoy taking house points like that" Hermione exclaimed, and then looked over at Ron as if it was his fault Ginny looked forward to taking house points.

"They shouldn't have made me a prefect then" Ginny answered coolly and grabbed a chocolate frog. Harry was a bit surprised to see Ginny act like this, but he was also very happy that she spoke freely in front of him.

"And I swear the next student who calls me the youngest Weasley is going to get detention" Ginny said savagely as she took a bite from the frog.

"Well, you are the youngest Weasley" Ron stated.

"So what" Ginny snapped and swallowed the rest of the frog "I'm sick of being the youngest Weasley. If they have to call me Weasley they can call me the Weasley girl"

"So" Hermione said clearly trying to change the subject "We met some people from the DA"

"Yeah" Ron added quickly also trying to change the subject. "They wonder if you will continue it"

"I don't know" Harry said "Depends on the Defence against the dark arts professors"

"What is that supposed to mean" Tonks asked in mock anger.

"Who knows maybe the too of you prefers to teach how to style hair by magic" Harry said and glanced over to Tonks and Fleur. Tonks had long silver hair and Fleur had pink curly hair.

"Oh" Fleur said and changed her hair back to normal with a wave of her wand "Maybe we can do something together"

"Like extra lessons?" Hermione asked.

"No" Tonks exclaimed "It has to be something fun"

Ginny glanced down on her watch "Let's go patrol" she said grinning.

Hermione agreed and Ron followed them reluctantly. More prefects had apparently decided to patrol the corridors because the door opened and Malfoy Crabbe and Goyle entered. For a few moments Malfoy was stunned, he stared at Fleur and then he seemed to snap out of it and looked over at Tonks.

"Well, well, well Potter can't go to Hogwarts without aurors" Malfoy said with a smirk "afraid the dark lord will get you?" Crabbe and Goyle chuckled on cue.

"Get out Malfoy" Harry snapped and got up from his seat.

"Why should I, your prefect friends have left you" Malfoy said maliciously.

"Leave Malfoy" Said Tonks voice angrily from behind Harry.

"Oh, I would but you aurors have no power to make me do anything" Malfoy smirked. "I happen to know very well what aurors may and may not do"

"Leave now or you'll start the term in detention" Fleur said sternly, Harry knew at once that McGonagall would like Fleur.

“Detention? You are not even an auror Delacour!” Malfoy snapped at her “You’ll be sorry for making friends with Potter”

“That will be a week of detention Malfoy” Fleur snapped “And watch it or I’ll have you’re badge too” Harry smirked, he could see that Malfoy was a little surprised by Fleur’s sentence.

“Professor Tonks and Professor Delacour will be teaching the Defence against the dark arts” Harry stated calmly. He could see the expression on Malfoy’s face change from surprised to angry. Malfoy cast one final glance at Tonks and Fleur and left the compartment with his cronies, slamming the door shut. Harry burst out laughing, he wished Ron could have seen this it was almost better then when the fake Moody had turned Malfoy into a ferret. Tonks laughed too for a moment before she saw Fleur expression. Fleur was livid her skin had started to change into feathers on her arms and she was glaring at Tonks.

“Stop grinning like a fool” She snapped at Tonks “You are a professor! If you ever laugh like that in front of a student I will hurt you”

“What? He just called you a blood-traitor” Tonks exclaimed Harry could see that she slightly scared of Fleur’s temper. Harry hurriedly stepped over to Fleur and tried to calm her down but Fleur didn’t want to calm down she shrugged away from Harry.

“What he calls me has nothing to do with anything” Fleur said dangerously.

“Are you stupid? He just threatened you” Tonks asked incredulously. This was a bad thing to say, Fleur received the last piece of anger needed for a full veela transformation.

“Calm down” Harry urged her and tried to catch her bird claw but changed his mind when he saw that her talons were very sharp and that sparks had started to erupt from her palms. He instead decided just putting his arms around her. She was much softer then usual her plumage reminded him a bit about Hedwig they had about the same colour only Fleur was rather silvery then white. Fleur struggled to get lose for a short moment, but Harry had her in a very firm hug.

"You'll pull your feathers out" Harry said and held her even harder she seemed to realise that he wouldn't let her go and held still.

Fleur glared at him for a moment with one eye the way Buckbeak usually looks at him. Harry could somehow feel the anger inside her he supposed that it must be one of her veela powers running amok. It slowly vanished and at the same time she slowly lost her feathers and she started to look at him with both her deep blue eyes.

"Thanks... wing-ban" Fleur said softly and started to cry, Fleur usually cried after a veela transformation. She hated herself for losing control and she hated herself for being angry with someone who didn't deserve it at all.

"I'm sorry" Fleur said looking up from Harry's shoulder momentarily
"I'm so sorry Tonks"

Tonks looked a little bit shocked at the way she was now crying instead of yelling. "It's okay Fleur, you were right. I shouldn't have laughed"

"I'm so sorry" Fleur sobbed into Harry's shoulder and then after a few moments she whispered in Harry's ear so that Tonks couldn't hear
"What if I do that in class?"

"Then people won't forget to turn in their homework" Harry whispered back "Besides you wouldn't be the only teacher who shows emotions. Snape can't look at me without twitching a muscle in his face"

"But this is so much worse" Fleur wailed.

"No, it isn't" Harry said firmly "Snape is nasty all the time and you are never nasty you just get angry sometimes"

"Yeah" said Tonks who seemed to realize what Fleur had been whispering "Besides we are going to be teachers, we don't have to be nice"

Fleur dried her tears and smiled slightly "Yeah, you're right"

“And you handled Malfoy as well as McGonagall would” Harry said soothingly.

“Yeah I didn’t even think of detention” Tonks agreed “I was trying to think of a loophole in the law so that I could curse him”

“Thanks, you are the best friends I ever had” Fleur said and smiled sadly.

“You shouldn’t have given her a detention anyway” Hermione’s voice said from outside the compartment.

“It isn’t my fault we can’t take points before term starts” Ginny’s voice replied.

Hermione muttered something that Harry couldn’t hear.

“So I was just going to let her get away with it?” Ginny said as she opened the door to the compartment and entered, Ron and Hermione followed her in.

Harry looked at her questionably.

“What” Ginny snapped at him.

“Nothing” Harry said utterly bewildered Ginny had never snapped at him before.

“Ginny gave Millicent Bulstrode a detention” Hermione explained.

“Why?” Tonks asked curiously.

“She wouldn’t step out of the way” Ron said, Harry didn’t believe his ears. Ron gave him a look that said very clearly, ‘I know’.

“So what have you been doing?” Hermione asked.

“I’ll tell you later” Harry replied shortly, he knew that Fleur didn’t want to discuss her job with them. They were after all her students.

They changed into their Hogwarts robes and a few minutes later the train came to a halt at Hogsmeade station. Harry carried

Crookshanks and Tonks carried Pigwidgeon. Ron kept casting nervous glances over at Tonks, Harry couldn't blame him Tonks dropped things as often as Neville did. Ron, Hermione and Ginny disappeared to make sure everyone got off all right.

"Firs' years! Firs' years over here!" Hagrid's voice boomed over the platform as Harry stepped down on the platform "All right, Harry, Tonks?"

Harry waved back to Hagrid and then turned to Fleur "Fleur you're a first year"

"Oh, no I really..." Fleur said.

"You have to you're a first year" Tonks said "And Hagrid won't bite you" At this moment Pigwidgeon started hooting madly as if calling Fleur a chicken though Harry knew Ron's owl often started to hoot when there was lots of commotion.

"All right" Fleur replied tensely and walked away towards Hagrid. Several boys turned their heads to goggle at her as she passed them.

"Don't know what she is complaining about" Tonks muttered to herself but then she shone up "Common Harry I haven't seen Hogwarts for ages"

They soon found Ron, Hermione and Ginny, Tonks dragged them hurriedly to a carriage. Ron looked sceptically in front of it before they all entered.

"Oh, it's so exciting I remember my sorting I was so scared" Tonks said dreamily "We must have just missed each other I graduated 91"

"Yeah" Harry said "I must have set that Boa Constrictor on my cousin when you did your NEWTs"

"Oh, right" Tonks said eagerly "SERPENSORTIA" Hermione shrieked as a huge sand coloured snake uncoiled itself from the tip of Tonks wand. Harry quickly pulled his legs off the floor he noticed that the rest of them did the same.

“What are you thinking” Ron yelled at Tonks.

“Sorry” Tonks replied quickly “Sorry, I just got carried away”

The snake hissed angrily on the floor, but to Harry it wasn’t a hiss.

“Back off or I’ll bite” The snake said angrily “I mean it get back”

Harry looked around at his friends. They all looked expectantly at him.
“It said to back off or it’ll bite”

“Tell it we won’t hurt it” Tonks said eagerly, she obviously didn’t find the fact that Harry was a parselmouth the slightest scary.

He focused on the snake and hissed softly “We won’t hurt you” and then in he added “Slither over to me” The snake raised its head and looked at Harry for a moment before it slithered over to him, and it didn’t stop there it continued up to his lap where it coiled up like a cat.

“Wow” Exclaimed Tonks awestruck. “That is so cool”

“It’s nothing I’m proud of” Harry said gloomily, he hated to be special and especially in the same way as Voldemort.

“Don’t be stupid Harry” Ginny snapped angrily. Harry was once again surprised Ginny had now snapped at him twice in less than an hour.
“There are loads of people who would give anything to be a parselmouth”

“I guess so” Harry replied lamely, he didn’t dare argue with her, he still remembered the way she had glared at Fleur and the way she looked naked; he hadn’t realised it before but Ginny scared him. The carriages pulled up outside the doors to the entrance hall and came to a halt. Tonks vanished the snake with a wave of her wand and she entered Hogwarts.

“I’m so happy to be back” Tonks exclaimed as they walked through the doors to the great hall. There was an awkward moment when they had to separate.

“Right don’t be late for class” Tonks said trying to sound stern and walked up to the teachers table. A few Hufflepuff seven years waved at her as she walked up behind the staff table Tonks waved back at them and for a moment forgetting to focus on where she was going and knocked over Hagrid’s empty chair. Harry could see Draco Malfoy snigger from the Slytherin table and felt a rush of anger it faded however when he remembered that Malfoy got a week of detentions. Harry sat down at Gryffindor table next to Neville, Ron sat down on his other side and Hermione and Ginny seated themselves opposite him.

“Guess what?” Harry asked them as they sat down. Nobody replied “Draco and his little friends turned up in our compartment”

“He did” Said Ron eagerly “What happened” Hermione, Ginny and Neville looked expectantly at him.

“He wouldn’t leave” Said Harry with a big smile “He thought that Fleur and Tonks was there for my protection and didn’t have the right to tell him anything”

“Who are Tonks and Fleur?” Neville interjected “It’s not Fleur Delacour is it?”

“Yeah it is, they are our Defence against dark arts teachers” Ron said “So what did they do to him”

“Professor Delacour gave him a week of detentions” Harry said with a grim smile.

“She did” Ron exclaimed happily.

“So did he leave then?” Neville asked as he looked over at the Slytherin table.

“He left when I told him they were professors. You should have seen his face” Harry said and then added to Ron “But don’t mention this to Fleur, she got kind of angry when Tonks and I started to laugh”

“Why not, we should give her a prize of some kind” Ron said.

"Don't be stupid Ron, as Harry said Professor Delacour gave a Malfoy detention not Fleur" Hermione said briskly. Harry was quite sure that Hermione had, consciously or subconsciously, chosen words that would cause Ron to reply.

"Oh, I see" Said Ron seriously Hermione looked a little surprised for a moment before Ron continued sarcastically "It was Professor Delacour that gave the detention how stupid of me to think that it was Fleur. I mean they are so different they don't even look the same"

"Fine why don't you go congratulate her when she gets here and we'll see how she reacts" Hermione said coolly.

"What is that supposed to mean" Ron said his voice rising slightly.

"She doesn't want to discuss work with us since we are her students" Ginny explained quickly hoping to prevent the Ron and Hermione argument that was building up. Ron glared at his sister for a moment and looked as if he was going to say something but at that moment, Hagrid and Fleur entered the hall talking animatedly. Apparently, Fleur and Hagrid got very well along, Hagrid sat down at his place at the end of the staff table and Fleur walked over and sat down between Snape and Tonks. Harry saw Snape glare furiously at them especially at Fleur. If he knew Snape as well as he thought he did Snape was angry that a nineteen year old part veela had stolen the defence against the dark arts position from him. Harry smiled to himself, he wondered if Snape would have enough sense to be polite towards Fleur or if Fleur would go feathery on him and perhaps even flame him.

"Oh I like to see that fight" Ron muttered as he too looked up at Fleur and Snape. The doors to the great hall swung open and the new first years entered led professor McGonagall. The first years were looking as terrified as ever, they looked around in the great hall and seemed even more terrified when they realized they were the centre of attention.

"Hurry up, hurry up, hurry up" Ron chanted silently, Harry knew that by some reason Ron always got extra hungry when he had to sit down and wait for the food. A brim on the sorting hat opened and the hall fell silent as it sung its annual sorting song. When it was done the

great hall filled with applauds, it had not given them a warning this year but it wasn't really necessary since everyone already knew Voldemort was back.

"When I call your name, you will put on the hat and sit on the stool to be sorted" Professor McGonagall said to the first years "Lisa Ammon" a fairly pretty black girl ran up to the chair and put the hat on her head.

"RAVENCLAW!" The hat shouted after a few moments.

"Martin Brunker" McGonagall read from her parchment.

"HUFFLEPUFF!"

"Hurry up, hurry up, hurry up" Ron continued to chant silently. Harry heard a disapproving noise from behind him. Nearly Headless Nick was sitting there he looked sternly at Ron but didn't say anything.

"Hello Nick" Harry said as the first Slytherin was sorted.

"Hello Harry, how has summer been?" Nearly Headless Nick asked politely.

"Very good, thank you" Harry replied.

"Madeleine Durham"

"GRYFFINDOR!" All Gryffindor students applauded happily and Madeleine Durham ran happily over to a second year who obviously was a friend of hers. Harry talked politely to the Gryffindor ghost about the summer.

"Salina Malfoy" McGonagall said Harry turned his head so fast that he cricked his neck.

"There's a Slytherin" Ron stated as he looked over at a small girl with long silvery hair and a thin pointed face. She was extremely pretty, and easily the cutest girl in her year.

"Think she is Malfoy's sister" Asked Hermione as Salina Malfoy walked up towards the stool.

"No, dad said they only wanted one child to get an heir" Ron replied, Salina sat nervously down on the chair and put the hat on, which sank down over her pale face.

"She must be his cousin or something" Ginny said.

"Probably" Hermione agreed.

"I think she have broken it" Ron said as the hat didn't say anything.

"Yeah" Agreed Harry "Draco got sorted at once"

"She doesn't have to be in Slytherin" Hermione said.

"Of course she's in Slytherin" Ron exclaimed "every one of us even Percy was in Gryffindor and the Malfoys have been in Slytherin for centuries"

"Yeah" Agreed Ginny "Besides what do you think her family would say if she was in..."

"GRYFFINDOR!" The hat shouted. The hall fell into silence nobody moved and much less applauded. Salina Malfoy didn't move either the hat still covered her face. Finally, Hermione started to clap her hands they sounded very alone in the great hall but Hermione didn't stop. Professor McGonagall walked over to Salina Malfoy and pulled the hat off her. Harry could now see her face, she looked petrified. He glanced over at Draco; he too looked shocked but also angry. Hermione kicked him under the table and he started to applaud too. Soon Ron, Ginny and Neville joined them and some others down the table probably the seven-year prefects. McGonagall managed to persuade Salina Malfoy to get up from the chair and pointed down at Hermione. Hermione quickly moved over so that there was a free seat between her and Ginny and tried to catch Salina's eye. Salina walked slowly towards them with her head turned down. Hermione had stopped clapping now and the sound was replaced by a low whisper threw out the hall. When Salina reached them, she stopped behind Hermione and stood still.

"David Moore" McGonagall said loudly and there by taking some attentions from Salina.

“Eh, would you like to sit down?” Hermione asked awkwardly. Salina didn’t reply instead she looked over at the Slytherin table at the other side in the hall. Harry followed Salina’s gaze over and saw that she was looking at Draco. Draco Malfoy was glaring furiously at her and perhaps by pure spite she turned around and sat down.

“I’m Hermione” Hermione said “And this is Ginny”

Salina looked like if she wanted to cry but managed to keep her tears back “Hello” She whimpered shortly and looked down at her plate. Hermione looked desperately up at him and Ron for some kind of advice of what to do. Harry had no idea he looked over at Ron and saw that he too had a blank expression.

“This is Ron, Ginny’s brother” Hermione said and seemed to decide to just act as if nothing. “Next to him are Harry and then Neville”

“Hello” Salina said sadly only glancing up at them for a fraction of a second. Harry suddenly realised that Sirius must have gone through something like this when he was sorted.

“It’s only houses” Ginny said softly “it doesn’t really matter, you are just braver than you are pure blooded” By these words Salina put her face on her arms and started to cry. Harry felt his anger rise what kind of parents would care what house their daughter was sorted in and then he thought of Lucius Malfoy; he was mad enough to care about such a stupid thing and his brother who he presumed was this girl’s father probably was too.

“Welcome and welcome back to a new year at Hogwarts” Dumbledore’s voice said and Harry realised that the sorting must be over “Before we dig in I would like to announce that we have a new school record” every one was looking at Dumbledore even Salina dried her tears and looked up.

“Miss Hermione Granger of Gryffindor” Dumbledore said and looked over at her as did every one else “Managed to get eleven outstanding in her OWL test and has the highest OWL score in more than fifty years and also is the only muggle born witch to get eleven Os since the OWL system was invented 1804” There was a round of applause from every table but the Slytherin.

"Yes, yes well done Miss Granger" Dumbledore said happily "Now, dig in!" and at once that tables filled with food. Ron closed his eyes in relief for a short second before he savagely started to eat. Harry piled loads of food on his plate he too was very hungry but lost most of his appetite when he looked over at Salina she had once more buried her face in her arms. Ginny had put one arm around her and was trying to soothe her. Harry tried to imagine what it must be like to disappoint your parents like Salina had, but found it very hard as he couldn't even remember his parents then he thought of Sirius again.

"You know Sirius Black, Salina?" Harry asked softly, he didn't really care if anyone overheard him as Sirius was dead. Salina looked up at him in pure shock of the odd question. Ron, Hermione, Ginny and Neville looked up at him warningly but Harry didn't care.

"What?" Salina asked and tried to dry her tears.

Harry smiled slightly "He was sorted into Gryffindor too"

"Oh" Salina said.

"His mother was, well, not too happy about that, but anyway the sorting hat doesn't make mistakes. You will be very happy in Gryffindor" Harry said.

"Yeah" Ginny said "Both mum and dad's families was not too happy that they were sorted into Gryffindor. But they wouldn't even have met otherwise and I wouldn't even exist"

"You're a Weasley" Salina said rather rudely. Ron glared at Salina for a moment before Hermione kicked him hard under the table.

"Yes" Ginny replied "But call me Ginny"

"You like chicken?" Hermione asked and Salina nodded. Hermione put some chicken on Salina's plate "How about broccoli" Hermione continued to put food on Salina's plate and practically forced her to eat. When they had finished with desert Dumbledore rose from his seat and the great hall fell silent.

“Now that we are hungry no more I have a few start of term words to give. Firstly, I would like to welcome our new Defence against the dark arts professors. Some of our seven years may remember Nymphadora Tonks” Dumbledore said happily. Tonks stood up and received applause from almost every one especially from the seven years Hufflepuffs, Harry, Hermione, Ron and Ginny.

“And most of our students will probably remember Beauxbaton’s Tri wizard champion Fleur Delacour” Dumbledore said and Fleur got up and received very enthusiastic applause from the male part of the Hogwarts students. Harry looked over at Malfoy and noticed that he Crabbe and Goyle probably were the only males that didn’t clap their hands. He caught Fleur eye and beamed at her, she smiled back and Harry noticed that some boys and girls looked over at him. He blushed and looked down.

“Secondly the forbidden forest is not just forbidden to all students but also very, very dangerous” Dumbledore said when Fleur sat down.

“Think he added the dangerous bit ‘cause of the centaurs?” Ron asked.

“Yeah” Harry said “and Hagrid’s... new friend”

“Finally Mr Filch our caretaker has asked me to remind you all that magic should not be performed in the corridors and between classes” Dumbledore looked over the students proudly and finally his eyes landed on Tonks

“I think this year we have time for the school song before we go to bed” Dumbledore said.

Harry looked up at the staff table the teacher didn’t seem too pleased by this, except Tonks who was beaming, she closed her eyes for a moment and turned into someone who looked like an opera singer and stood up. Fleur looked at Tonks puzzled. When they all started singing no one sung half as loud as Tonks who sung the school song as if it was an Opera. Tonks wasn’t a very good singer and soon the students laughed more at Tonks then they sung. Hermione managed to sing properly until Tonks started to change her nose between the lines of the song, this was to much for Hermione who just had to

laugh as much as the rest. Even Dumbledore seemed to have problems not laughing as he sung. When the song ended there were about twenty people still singing among them Dumbledore, McGonagall and Fleur. Snape had of course not sung a word of the song. Tonks bowed proudly when the song ended.

Harry understood at once, why Tonks head of house had said that she lacked the ability to behave herself.

"Wonderful, thank you all and especially Professor Tonks" Dumbledore said and bowed to her "now off to bed"

Ginny gathered the first years up and led them off for bed. Harry waited back to speak to Fleur and told the others to go without him. The teacher slowly got up from their seats. Fleur caught his eye and walked up to him while Tonks was busy talking to the Fat Fryer.

"How is my ickle girl doing her first day at school" Harry asked as he took her hands, it had become a bit of a habit to hold hands. It felt very good just to hold Fleur's hands. If he held them tightly, he could feel her heart beat.

"I'm not ickle" Fleur replied in a jokingly childish way.

"I'm taller then you" Harry stated, it was true Harry had grown a lot during last year and was almost six feet tall while Fleur was only about five feet ten.

"I'm older then you" Fleur replied.

"That's only because you've lived longer" Harry said childishly.

Fleur laughed "Oh, I never thought of that"

"So how did it go, so far?" Harry asked.

"Fine, Hagrid is really nice, and the castle is really impressive from the lake" Fleur said "How about you?"

"A bit tired, Tonks conjured a snake in the carriage to see if I really could speak to snakes" Harry said "And you know about Salina Malfoy"

"Poor girl" Fleur replied "but she is lucky to be in Gryffindor with you"

"Yeah, well can you imagine what her parents will say when Draco tells them that their daughter is friends with the-boy-who-lived"

"Oh, think he will tell them?" Fleur asked.

"Yes, didn't you see the way he glared at her?" Harry said.

"I thought he was looking at you" Fleur said

"He wasn't" Harry said shortly "So how's Snape behaving"

"He hasn't really said anything" Fleur said.

"You might want to tell him that Draco got a week of detentions, teachers usually reports to the students head of house when giving longer detentions" Harry explained.

"Right" Fleur said "I'll tell him tomorrow"

"You called me wing-ban again" Harry stated suddenly remembering her latest veela transformation.

"Oh, well it suits you" Fleur said "You always make my wings disappear, why don't you like it?"

"Sure I just wondered" Harry replied. He was happy that he had gotten a nickname.

"Yeah, but now that I think of it Wing-beat suits you better" Fleur said matter-of-factly.

Harry smiled "I like that" It reminded him a little of Sirius nickname.

"Know where you are sleeping yet?" Harry asked.

“No, Tonks does though” Fleur said “She said, Minerva told her it was a secret door in our office”

“Sorry to break you up love birds” Tonks said happily “Got to get up early tomorrow”

“Yeah” Fleur agreed “Love you” Fleur whispered so that Tonks couldn’t hear.

“Love you too” Harry whispered back “See you tomorrow” Harry hugged her briefly and left towards his dormitory after a quick good night to Tonks. He reached the Fat Lady and gave her the password “Aestas Caelum” Hermione had told him it before she left him in the great hall. As the portrait of the Fat Lady swung open, Harry felt at home. As if he had been away on a long tiresome trip, he immediately felt much more tired and staggered up the stairs to his dormitory.

A Malfoy in Gryffindor, who would have guessed?

Next chapter is called “Without a sound”

Please Review!

Chapter 14 Without a sound

“Is it true?” asked Dean Thomas as he entered the dormitory.

“What?” Harry asked tiredly and looked over at Ron who rolled his eyes and got into bed.

“You are Fleur Delacour’s boyfriend” Neville said.

“So what if I am” Harry said as he started to change into his pyjamas.

“It’s true?” Dean Thomas exclaimed with a wide grin.

“Maybe” Harry replied and got into bed.

“Ah, common Harry” To Harry’s surprise Neville said, Neville usually was a very private person who didn’t say much and didn’t ask much.

“Yes, she is my girlfriend” Harry admitted.

“How did you manage it?” asked Seamus eagerly.

“No idea, it just happened” Harry said and pulled the hangings close.

“Night” He said before they could ask anything more. Before long, he was in a deep restful sleep.

“Morning Harry” Ron said forcefully the following morning and there by waking him up “We don’t want to be late for the sign up”

“Make Dudley do it” Harry replied sleepily and then grunted involuntary as Ron threw a pillow at him.

“Yeah, right the sign up” Harry stated as he realised where he was.

“So what NEWTs are you going for Neville” Ron asked as he got dressed.

“Well I got Os in Herbology and Defence against the dark arts thanks to you Harry. And Es in Care of magical creatures and astronomy” Neville explained “So I’m going for those, what about you?”

“Harry and I are taking Care of Magical Creatures, Charms, Defence against the dark arts, Transfigurations and Potions” Ron said.

“With Snape” Dean burst out sleepily from his bed as if he had misheard them.

“Yeah” Ron said bitterly “Up yet Harry?”

“Yeah sure” Harry replied and finally managed to get out of bed.

“Hurry up Harry” Ron said.

Harry groaned a reply and started to get dressed in his Hogwarts robes. They left their dormitories a short while later and found that Hermione was waiting for them in the common room. Harry smiled to himself every thing so far this morning was just as it had been ever since after Halloween in his first year when they had become friends. Sure he and Ron was a lot taller and Hermione had turned into a young woman, but these things mattered very little. He thought of all they had gone through and yet things were the same as ever except perhaps the fact that Ron and Hermione were in love but they had always been in love in a way. Harry had always been a bit of an outsider when it came to their almost constant arguments on the other side Hermione had been left out a lot during long Quidditch talks.

“Isn’t it great” Harry asked absentmindedly as they were walking down towards the great hall.

“What is” Ron asked Harry, Harry noticed that Ron and Hermione were holding hands.

“Every thing” Harry replied “It’s just the same as ever”

“Yeah” Hermione agreed.

“Remember when Malfoy tricked us out that night in our first year?” Ron asked dreamily “First night the three of us where out of bed”

“Yeah” Harry said fondly.

“So you finally admit that he tricked you” Hermione asked.

“Well, you got tricked too you know a good student should have stayed by the portrait” Harry said “But don’t worry I won’t tell anyone that you are just as bad as us”

Hermione snorted, but smiled nonetheless.

“I miss our first year” Ron said.

Harry sighed he missed Sirius, and Hedwig badly.

“I just wish Sirius and Hedwig...” He said and trailed off; he smiled sadly at their memory. “They were great weren’t they?”

“The best” Ron replied. Harry suddenly recalled that he had Hedwig’s ashes in his trunk.

“Want to spread Hedwig’s ashes with me?” Harry asked “Just the three of us”

“What about Fleur” Ron asked.

“She didn’t know Hedwig” Harry replied sadly.

“Of course Harry” Hermione said “We’ll be there... when do you plan to...”

“I don’t know, soon” Harry said as they entered the great hall. It was the same as ever. Today it was a clear blue sky outside that was mirrored by the ceiling for them, judging by the some leaves that fluttered by far above them it was blowing hard outside. Harry looked up on the staff table and saw Fleur talking to Tonks. Fleur seemed to sense his presence because she turned her head and smiled at him Harry smiled back. They walked over to their usual place at the Gryffindor table and started eating breakfast.

“You know how Salina is doing?” Harry asked Hermione.

“No idea” said Hermione so coolly that neither of the boys persuaded the subject. The owls swooped inside to deliver the morning mail.

Harry looked down on his plate and tried to ignore them completely. This was made rather hard as Hermione's Daily Prophet owl swept down and knocked over his pumpkin juice and there by drenching Ron who was sitting next to him.

"Stupid Owl" Ron cursed as he got up.

"Assiccare" Hermione cried waving her wand at Ron, the dripping stopped and Ron's robes dried though there were huge stains left. "Scourgify" Hermione added and waved her wand again. The stains disappeared immediately.

"Thanks Hermione" Ron said and sat down again. Professor McGonagall was walking around the table handing out schedules to every one except the sixth years who she instead reminded to stay after breakfast for the sign up. They finished their breakfast and slowly most people started to leave the hall. The teachers who by now also were done with breakfast started to bring out quills and parchment.

"Sixth years Attention Please!" Professor McGonagall said, every one in the hall turned and looked at her "As you all know, you are here today to sign up for the NEWT classes you wish to attend. Please step up to the corresponding professor and ask them to enlist you in their NEWT class"

The great hall filled with the noise of moving chairs as every one got up.

"Let's sign up for the defence against the dark arts first" Harry said and walked hurriedly up to Fleur and Tonks, he reached them before anyone else.

Fleur smiled at him for a short moment but then she lost her smile and drew her lips into a thin line "Mr Potter" She said seriously.

"Professor Delacour" Harry replied curtly.

"I see you got an outstanding in Defence against the dark arts, is that correct?" Fleur asked so sternly that Harry had great difficulty not to laugh.

“Yes” He replied.

“And you want to attend the newt Defence against the Dark arts class” Fleur asked, Harry glanced over at Tonks who apparently had as much trouble as him not laughing she held a hand over her mouth in an attempt to look serious.

“Yes” Harry said and turned his gaze back at Fleur.

“Are you ready to work hard and always do your best?” Fleur asked Harry could see in her eyes that she too had some problems not laughing aloud.

“Yes, I am” Harry said firmly.

“Excellent sign your name and house here” Fleur said and handed him an empty list that was entitled “Defence against the dark arts sixth years” Harry scribbled his name and Gryffindor down on the list.

“Har... Mr Potter can I have a word” Tonks asked when he was done and Hermione was going through the same process as Harry just had.

“Of course, Professor Tonks” Harry replied seriously, Tonks bit her lip hard not to burst out laughing. Harry followed Tonks over to an empty corner of the great hall where they wouldn’t be over heard too easily.

“What’s up” Harry asked as Tonks stopped and faced him.

“It’s Fleur really, she got this idea last night when we were talking about the DA” Tonks said.

Harry nodded for her to go on.

“A Dueling Club and you would kind of help me and Fleur teaching it” Tonks explained.

“Oh” Harry said thinking it over, he thought of the dueling club that Lockhart and Snape had tried to start back in his second year it had been terrible, but the idea had been quite good and with Fleur, Tonks and he teaching it would be a lot more fun “Yeah it would be fun”

“We thought that it might be good to meet at least once a week” Tonks said “with lesson planning and all it would take loads of time and you got Quidditch too... anyway that’s what Fleur said”

“Have you asked Dumbledore yet?” Harry asked.

“Uh-huh, he thinks it’s a good idea and we may use the great hall” Tonks said happily.

“So, when are we starting?” Harry asked also smiling now; he imagined calling his DA with the galleons that Hermione had created later and telling them the good news.

“We figured that it would be good to wait until the Quidditch trials are over” Tonks said happily.

“Great” Harry exclaimed as he saw that Hermione and Ron were approaching them.

“What’s great” Ron asked.

“Tell you later” Harry replied with a grin “Let’s go sign up for potions”

They walked over to the line leading up to Snape, luckily it was the short line since Snape only accepted students with outstanding in his NEWT class. Snape glared furiously at Harry as he approached Snape, he Ron and Hermione had agreed that it would be best for Harry to just sign his name quickly and then get out of Snape’s sight.

“Potter” Snape hissed and a muscle in his cheek twitched angrily “Sign your name and house and get out of here” Harry quickly scribbled his name on the list he noticed that Draco had signed his name first, and then to his surprise Crabbe and Goyle. Harry was certain that Crabbe and Goyle had not received Os in potions. He cast an accusing glance up at Snape when he had signed his name. Snape smirked evilly at him. Harry walked away and waited for Ron and Hermione to sign their names.

“Crabbe and Goyle” Ron said incredulously as he approached Harry “They can’t even have gotten a T together”

“Did you see” Hermione asked them as she too joined them.

“Yeah Crabbe and Goyle” Ron said gloomily. They decided to sign up for Care of Magic creatures next. Hagrid was very proud over his OWL takers to say the very least. Hagrid unlike most other teachers accepted all students no matter their grade into his class. Next, they signed up for charms and after that Transfiguration. Flitwick congratulated them happily and told them that he was very happy to have them in his class while McGonagall simply congratulated them. Harry and Ron joined the rest of the sixth-year Gryffindor students at their table they talked happily while they waited for Hermione to sign up for the rest of her classes, she was the last one to join the Gryffindor table as she had more classes to sign up for then any one else. Professor McGonagall waved her wand at the lists that they had put their names on and a short moment later she ordered Ron and Hermione as the Gryffindor prefect to hand out the schedules that she just had created. Harry glanced down on his schedules when Ron handed it to him.

| | | | | | | |
|------------|---------|---------|---------|------|------|-----------------|
| Monday | | | | | | |
| 8:00-11:45 | | | | | | Transfiguration |
| Tuesday | | | | | | |
| 8:00-11:45 | | | | | | Charms |
| Wednesday | | | | | | |
| 8:00-11:45 | Defence | against | the | dark | arts | |
| Thursday | | | | | | |
| 8:00-11:45 | | | | | | Potions |
| 1:00-4:45 | Care | of | Magical | | | Creatures |
| Friday | | | | | | |

Harry looked surprised at his schedule he had never seen anything like this, he was quite sure that it must have been a mistake he looked over at Neville and saw that he too was looking on his schedule in disbelief.

“You too?” Asked Harry and gestured at his schedule.

“What... oh the schedule... think they have made a mistake?” Neville said.

"I don't know you got Defence against the dark arts on Wednesdays?" Harry asked.

"All morning" Neville stated.

"And care of Magical creatures Thursday afternoons?" Harry asked to make sure.

"Yes" Neville replied. Harry didn't know what to believe, it didn't seem like much work at all and on Fridays he didn't have a single lesson.

"As you probably have noticed by now" McGonagall said loudly making everyone look up at her "Those of you who have enlisted for my NEWT class have Transfiguration on Monday mornings Please go and fetch your books, parchments and quills I expect you in my classroom no later then 8:15"

Harry glanced down on his watch it was about eight and all the teacher hurried off to teach their morning classes. Harry joined up with Ron and Hermione and left to get their stuff.

"I never thought it would be this good" Said Ron happily as they walked up the stairs towards Gryffindor tower "I don't even have a single class on Fridays"

"Do you really believe that this year is going to be anything easier then last?" Hermione asked.

"Yes" Said Ron and then added uncertainly "why wouldn't it"

"I expect they will give us much more homework then last year" Hermione said.

"Impossible" Ron replied. They entered the transfiguration classroom a couple of minutes later. Harry noticed to his horror that Millicent Bulstrode, Pansy Parkinson and Draco Malfoy were already seated.

"Bloody hell" Ron muttered.

"Yeah" Harry agreed darkly, Malfoy wouldn't be able to do or say anything to him in front of McGonagall but the pure sight of him

angered Harry. There was also several Hufflepuffs, Ravenclaws and Gryffindors. They found some free seats and after a few moments, Professor McGonagall rose from her seat and closed the door to the classroom with a wave of her wand.

“Welcome to my NEWT class. The goal of this class is to prepare you for your NEWT transfiguration test in the end of your seventh year. We will be going through advanced vanishing spell this term and next term we will begin with human transfiguration” McGonagall said “Please open your books and turn to page 7”

They spent the most of the first part of the lesson going through what they had done last year. Ten o'clock McGonagall gave them a fifteen minutes break. The rest of the lesson they practiced vanishing. Hermione was of course best as usual second best was as far as Harry could tell Draco Malfoy. He felt his hate for Malfoy increase a notch. Malfoy wasn't stupid he was talented both in school work and Quidditch and even though he should know better he used all his talent to make life hard for Harry and his friends. At the end of the class, they received the greatest load of homework they had ever received. McGonagall told them that now that they were in sixth year they were supposed to take own responsibility for their schoolwork. They were dismissed, left her classroom and headed towards the great hall for lunch.

“Potter, heard Weasley managed to get the mudblood” Draco Malfoy said in his drawling voice when they were out of McGonagall's earshot “So you had to resort to halfbreeds”

Pansy Parkinson and Millicent Bulstrode sniggered. Ron made a move towards Malfoy but Hermione managed to hold him back.

“Shut up Malfoy” Harry replied coolly Malfoy would have to do a lot worse to get him lose his temper.

“I would normally have been surprised that you managed to get any girl at all human or not. But then I remembered that she just lost her poor excuse for parents and that little creature she called a sister” Malfoy said. It could not be helped Harry had drawn his wand and was pointing it straight at Malfoy.

“You’ll pay” Harry hissed.

“Potter, Malfoy” Fleur’s or rather at the moment Professor Delacour’s voice said sternly. Harry felt some of his anger fade and he poked his wand.

“Ten points from Gryffindor for pointing you wand at a fellow student Potter” Professor Delacour said sternly. Harry had a very hard time pretending that he was angry with Fleur for taking points of him. Malfoy expression made it even harder to not laugh he looked at Harry as if Harry had just proven that he in fact was Voldemort then after a moment, Malfoy smirked.

“Mr Malfoy I will expect you in my office at seven to arrange for your detention. Potter will you please follow me to my office now” Professor Delacour said. This wiped the smile of Draco’s face Harry wasn’t sure if it was the part of his detention or that Fleur had just asked Harry to her office, probably both Harry thought.

“See you later” Harry whispered to Ron and Hermione and walked off with Fleur.

“How were your first lessons” He asked as soon as they were out of earshot.

“It was okay we had the first years first, they were really shy at first but then Tonks made some noses and we had fun talking about recognizing dark artefacts, like Riddle’s diary” Fleur said “Then we had third years and we had them prepare for Boggarts next lesson”

They had now reached the door to her office and entered. Fleur and Tonks had not been able to decorate the office yet but they had managed to remove all Umbridge’s decorations. Tonks was sitting in the chair behind the desk reading something she stood up hastily as they entered.

“Oh, my look at the time already lunch and I am so very hungry” Tonks said and left the room hurriedly. When the door closed behind them they grabbed each other’s hands, Harry never got used to the wonderful feeling of holding Fleur’s hand. They squeezed gently so that they could feel their hart beats it was a very powerful feeling.

“So, what happened” Fleur asked after a moment as they sat down in a chair or rather Harry sat down and Fleur sat down in his knee.

“Nothing he just said some stupid stuff” Harry replied he didn’t want to tell Fleur exactly what Malfoy had said because he doubted that Dumbledore and the rest of the staff would be able to stop Fleur from burning Draco Malfoy to ashes.

“Oh, well Harry if you are going to teach the dueling club with us you can’t hex people in the corridor or people will know I favour you” Fleur said seriously.

“So you admit favouring me?” Harry asked with a grin. He knew that Fleur couldn’t help favouring him even if she tried not to.

“Ask no questions and be told no lies” Fleur replied with a grin she let go of Harry’s hand and put hers around him in a hug “So got your schedule?”

“Yes” Harry replied softly and handed him his schedule, Fleur looked it over.

“Bet you get loads of homework, I know we will give you plenty” She stated as she handed him the schedule back to him.

“I thought you favoured me” Harry replied with a smile.

“You wish” Fleur replied “Listen Wingbeat we are teaching the seven years how to defend them self against the imperius curse, and I was wondering if you could donate a few pages from your book”

“Yeah, sure when do you need them?” Harry asked.

“As soon as possible we have them after lunch” Fleur said.

“Want me to summon it at once?” He asked and pulled out his wand.

“ACCIO DUELING FOR MASTERS” Harry said clearly and focused on the book in his trunk.

“Better open the door” Fleur muttered and pulled out her own wand. But before Fleur had time to even open her mouth to say the door opening spell the door burst open so violently that it flew up against the wall with a loud crack of breaking wood. Harry stood up so quickly that Fleur fell to the floor, Harry didn’t mind at the moment. He had seen that door flow open in a similar way when Dumbledore had saved him from the fake Moody. He didn’t know what to think he half expected Voldemort himself appear in the door opening, but nobody entered, maybe they were wearing an invisibility cloak.

“Lumos Aparecium” Harry cried it was a spell to reveal invisible objects he had learned from dueling for masters. He couldn’t see any invisible person or object. Of course he had never tried this spell before and was not quite sure it was working thought a faint purple light shone from the tip of his wand, as it should. He noticed that the apparently solid wall at one end of the room had a door opening in it probably leading into their bedroom and bathroom.

“Fleur” He asked, maybe she had noticed something he hadn’t. He cast a quick glance over at her she too had her wand drawn and was standing in a defensive position.

“Nothing” She replied “BORRIRE” White foam were streaming out of her wand covering every inch of her office in seconds. Harry understood at once that in there was someone invisible in the room they would not be invisible any more, they would be covered in foam.

“Nothing” Harry stated and added “Finite Borrيره” the foam faded and vanished in matter of seconds. Harry looked down on the floor as the foam faded and saw that Dueling for Master were laying next to the chair they had been sitting in, he looked at Fleur questionably he had not seen it fly into the room and he had watched the door opening carefully after the door had burst open.

“Do you think it made the door burst open?” Fleur asked with raised eyebrows.

“Accio doesn’t work like that, it’s not fast enough and not powerful enough to do that to the door” He replied as he investigated the oak door, it had a long crack going from the top to the bottom splintered

wood was covering the floor around it. "More likely a prank or something"

"Why would anyone..." Fleur said and then after a short moment added heavily "yeah"

"Reparo" Harry cried and the splintered wood on the floor flew up into the door and the crack vanished.

"Potter" McGonagall's voice exclaimed from the door opening, she stepped inside and saw that Fleur was sitting in the chair they both had been sitting in a few moments ago.

"Fleur, what happened" McGonagall asked urgently, Harry was glad to hear that McGonagall seemed to accept Fleur as a full good teacher even though she just was nineteen.

"It seems as if someone blasted the door in, Minerva" Fleur replied and McGonagall looked over at the door.

"I've just repaired it, Professor" Harry said.

"You say it seems, Fleur" McGonagall asked.

"Yes, we were sitting in this" Fleur said and blushed slightly "chair, when the door burst open"

"There was no sparks or flames?" McGonagall asked raising an eyebrow.

"Nothing not even a sound, besides the crack from the door" Fleur said worriedly.

"You will have to inform Dumbledore about this" McGonagall stated.

"Yes, I have other issues to discuss with him as well" Fleur said in a very formal voice and then added "We are planning on starting a dueling club"

"A dueling club?" McGonagall asked in a high-pitched voice.

“Yes, Mr Potter would teach it with me and Tonks” Fleur said uncertainly.

“But what about Quidditch Potter” McGonagall asked panicky “I was going to ask you to become captain”

“Oh” Harry said the thought of who would be Quidditch captain this year had not occurred to him.

“With all your school work I can’t let you do both” McGonagall said.

“I can’t play Quidditch?” Harry asked desperately.

“Yes of course you can, but who am I going to ask to be captain? Miss Bell has already refused” The older woman said in a much higher voice than usual.

“Ron, is fairly talented Professor” Harry said carefully.

“Yes... Mr Weasley will do a good captain” McGonagall said as if trying to convince herself.

“Yes” Harry said firmly also trying to convince himself.

McGonagall left them after a quick goodbye and Fleur and Harry decided to get some lunch. When they reached the great hall Harry could see that Ron and Hermione were waiting for him even though they had finished their food, he said goodbye to Fleur and walked over to the Gryffindor table.

“Got detention?” Ron asked with a suggesting grin. “Bet most boys will be breaking rules to have a detention with her”

Hermione snorted and Harry sat down and started to pile food on his plate.

“What, don’t tell me you wouldn’t have minded writing lines for Lockhart” Ron said and then added teasingly “all night”

“Can’t you just forget about Lockhart” Hermione asked irately.

"Can't you two have your love arguments when I'm not around" Harry asked, Hermione blushed.

"What?" Ron asked raised his eyebrows.

"Never mind" Harry said "Listen something odd happened in Fleur's office"

"Harry mate, I really don't need to know about odd things that happen between you and your girlfriend when you are alone" Ron's stated and glanced up towards the staff table where Tonks sat. Hermione gave Ron a very doubtfully look.

"Well if you count the door being blasted in as something odd that..."

"The door was blasted in" Hermione shrieked "Are you all right?"

"What happened" Ron asked. Harry told them what had happened leaving out the detail that they had been sharing chair otherwise telling them every thing that had happened.

"Can I see your wand Harry?" Hermione asked when he had finished his story.

"Sure, why?" He said and handed her his wand.

"Well, Ron's old wand made loads of odd stuff when it was faulty" Hermione explained. Harry's stomach turned over, he loved his wand it had saved his life more then once and its core was from a phoenix he knew. Hermione held his wand gently between her fingers as if trying to feel the weight of it. She waved it lightly and finally muttered a spell that filled Harry's goblet with water.

"I'm no expert Harry, but I can't find any imbalance, crack or scratch that may be the cause of bursting up any door" Hermione said and then added disapprovingly "But you should clean and polish it a bit more often"

"Right, thanks Hermione" Harry said as he took a deep breath of relief, he promised himself to polish it at least once a week form now on.

Hermione wrinkled her forehead in her typical Hermione way; she was thinking hard.

“That leaves two alternatives, either someone blasted the door to interrupt you two or you lost sense of time and the book burst through the door” Hermione said.

“Why would I suddenly lose sense of time” Harry said irritably.

“I won’t blame you if you lose sense of time in Fleur’s company” Ron said and then added hastily as he saw Hermione’s furious expression “I mean, every boy loses sense of time when... uh, sometimes with their girlfriends”

“I wasn’t kissing her” Harry exclaimed “She was just sitting in my lap”

“That can sometimes be enough” Ron said knowledgably and then blushed furiously as he realised what he had just said, Hermione on the other hand looked rather pleased with herself and smiled brightly.

“I am absolutely sure that I did not lose sense of time” Harry said firmly to end the topic on what girlfriends can do to you to make you lose sense of time “And If you remember that door is a thick oak door”

“I know Harry, but why would anyone attack you and manage to do it with out sparks, flames or any sound” Hermione said and then added as an afterthought “I guess a really strong and well placed banishing charm could have done it. But I doubt that any student here is able to perform a powerful enough banishing charm in fact I don’t think anyone here but Dumbledore, Flitwick and perhaps McGonagall or Snape could do it”

“Ron” Harry asked jokingly “Where were Hermione when this event occurred”

“I wouldn’t interrupt what ever Fleur and you were doing” Hermione said “and I have never banished a door open, alohomora works perfectly fine for that”

“And Malfoy was here all the time” Ron said in a defeated voice.

“Told you it was odd” Harry said.

“Harry you wouldn’t mind to just summon something to make sure your accio works as it should” Hermione asked.

“Sure” Harry said “ACCIO FIREBOLT” They waited for a few moments before his broom came flying in to the great hall. It wasn’t allowed to do magic like this in the great hall but nobody really cared about these rules at least not as long as McGonagall or Snape didn’t notice.

“Same as always” Harry stated as he grabbed his broom and leaned it towards the table.

“So, Hermione got any lessons this afternoon” Harry asked.

“No, I got History of Magic tomorrow afternoon and Arithmancy on Wednesday afternoon and Herbology on Friday morning” Hermione explained eagerly “We really, really need to start on our Transfiguration homework”

“Oh come on Hermione we don’t have Transfigurations until next week” Ron said and rolled his eyes.

“So it will be ten times harder to do it today then Sunday night?” Hermione replied, she had a point of course but then again they didn’t even have single lesson on Friday if they hadn’t done it until then.

“What makes you think we would leave it until Sunday night?” Ron asked.

“If you don’t do it today what makes you think you would to it tomorrow” Hermione replied.

“We haven’t got a single lesson on Friday we can do it then” Ron said.

“You know on Friday, you will have homework from all the other classes too” Hermione explained for Ron in a triumphant sort of way.

“After Friday, Saturday comes and then Sunday” Ron replied as if he was teaching the days of the week to a three years old.

“Yes, very good Ron” Hermione said acidly “and then when Sunday is almost over it is called Sunday night and that’s when you are going to do your Transfiguration homework if you don’t do it today”

“Please, I rather have you kissing” Harry stated, Hermione blushed again. Harry knew that Hermione had not been arguing on purpose but she still loved every second of it.

“What” Asked Ron raising his eyebrows “What does kissing have to do with homework”

Harry looked over to Hermione; he wasn’t going to tell Ron anything it was her business to do that if she wanted to.

“What?” Ron asked Hermione as he saw where Harry was looking. Hermione was completely lost for words; finally, she decided to change the subject.

“I won’t have an afternoon of until Friday, so if you are ready Harry we could go and...” Hermione stopped for a moment and then added very quickly “go and spread Hedwig’s ashes”

Harry’s mind was wiped blank every thought of anything else then Hedwig was gone.

“Yeah, it’s a nice day too” Harry said slowly, he had lost all appetite and stood up.

“Let’s go then” He said awkwardly and started to walk towards Gryffindor Tower. Ron grabbed his Firebolt and they walked in silence all the way into his dormitory.

“Harry, you don’t have too, you can just go play Quidditch with Ron or something I...” Hermione said very quickly.

“No... I can’t have Hedwig... in my trunk... she would hate it” Harry interrupted Hermione in as he opened his trunk and pulled Hedwig’s urn out. He stared at it for a moment, before he closed his trunk. He started to regret that he had not asked Fleur to come along he wanted badly to hold her hand, every thing seemed so much easier with her.

They walked away from Gryffindor tower in silence sometimes Ron and Hermione would cast each other nervous glances and several times Hermione opened her mouth to say something but closed it again, lost for words. They walked up the many stairs to the top of the astronomy and finally went outside. Harry smiled sadly it couldn't have been a better day to spread ashes, the sky was almost completely clear and it was blowing very hard. The trees in the forbidden forest swayed dangerously when the wind caught them. Yet it was a warm day, the wind was warm and the sun was still burning bright though it was September 2nd. Harry walked around the tower so that they had the wind in their backs. It was a very nice view they were facing the lake and some of the forbidden forest further away the mountains. Harry opened the lid of Hedwig's urn some of her ashes in the top were caught by the wind and flew away quickly over the landscape.

Hedwig always were a very good flyer Harry thought he knew that every kind of neatly burned ash would probably fly away in the same way as Hedwig's ashes but at the moment it made sense to Harry that Hedwig's ashes could fly.

Harry could feel tears rolling down his cheeks, but didn't care in fact he was kind of happy to be able to cry for Hedwig, she deserved it. When the wind wasn't able to get any more of Hedwig's ashes he slowly started to pour it out. As he saw the small stream of ashes flowing out of the urn and being blown away by the wind he cried even more, it just was not fair why did it have to be Hedwig. He leaned the urn a little more when ashes stopped to pour out of it. He tried to remember when he had first seen Hedwig in Diagon Alley more then five years ago. Harry had been so surprised that anyone would buy him a real birthday present. He wondered for a moment if Hagrid knew about Hedwig being killed. He turned his head over in Hagrid's direction. Hagrid was outside teaching what looked like the fourth years, judging by what only could be Ginny Weasley's red hair, about Nifflers. He turned his head back to the urn and slowly poured the rest of the ashes out of it, soon the urn was empty. He levitated it over the edge of the tower and hit it as hard as he could with a Reductor curse. The urn withered to powder and blew away with the wind like the ashes. Hermione and Ron had been standing in silence

behind him all the time and now he suddenly felt very awkward to have them there.

“Could you” Harry said but stopped as he noticed that his voice wouldn’t hold, he cleared his throat and continued “Leave me alone”

“Are you sure Harry” Hermione said very softly.

“Yes” Harry said as firmly as he could “I just want to be alone”

“All right Harry” Ron said and pulled Hermione away.

He sat alone for what felt like hours, he saw a few clouds drift through the sky and the sun slowly started to descent. He wanted so badly to tell Hedwig that he would never forget her and that he would always love her, but it wasn’t possible. He wondered for a moment if Hedwig had found his parents somewhere and maybe Sirius too, perhaps they were all waiting for him. Then he thought that it didn’t really matter whether there was a place you got to when you died, if all just ended he wouldn’t complain. Though it would be really nice to know that his parents, Sirius and Hedwig were happy somewhere. Perhaps they had met the Delacour’s, he imagined for a moment Gabrielle riding on Padfoot’s back. He cried even more now but he was smiling too.

“Wingbeat?” Fleur’s French voice asked softly. She must have seen him because after a moment she sat down next to him, Harry looked up at her for a moment before he threw himself in her arms and sobbed loudly. After a few moments, Fleur started to cry too, Harry knew she couldn’t see him sad without thinking of sad things such as her family. They sat in silence crying as the sun slowly made its way across the sky.

“What was Gabrielle like?” Harry asked as the sky started to turn black.

Fleur looked up at him. Her eyes were red from crying “She was so innocent and happy, she couldn’t have cared less that Voldemort was back” Fleur took a deep breath “She was very brave too, she was only eight when Dumbledore asked her...” Fleur trailed off but Harry

knew anyway that she was talking about the second task in the tri wizard tournament.

"The thing I'll miss most" Fleur spat "Stupid" Fleur cursed badly "Tournament" she looked for a moment as if she was going to transform into her veela shape but then instead she started to cry more miserable then before. Harry placed a Cushioning charm on the stone floor and as the night fell, he placed a warming charm on them. It was a wonderful night for Astronomy not a cloud to cover the stars insight. They lay down on their backs Fleur rested her head on Harry's arm it was very comfortable to have Fleur close before he knew it he was asleep.

Someone was giggling, no not someone several peoples were giggling. Harry opened his eyes and saw to his surprise that several peoples were standing around them and above him the night sky. Then he noticed that he had silver blond hair all over him.

"Fleur" He said without thinking.

"What happened to Professor Delacour" a glee full voice asked him he looked up and saw to his horror that Pansy Parkinson was standing in the ring of peoples that had gathered around them, on each of her sides stood Crabbe and Goyle "It's Fleur now is it?"

"Shut up" An angry voice said that belonged to Neville Longbottom. Fleur was now stirring besides him and slowly opened her eyes.

"What's going on here" Professor Sinistra's voice said.

"Look's like Potter is dating a teacher, Professor" Pansy Parkinson said and Fleur practically flew to her feet blushing furiously. Professor Sinestra had walked over to them but didn't seem to be able to find words.

"Lovely night" Fleur said hoarsely "Mars is very bright" Harry had now gotten to his feet too.

"Yes" Said Sinestra looking up at the night sky "So is Venus"

“Well, we’ll just leave you too it” Fleur said and walked away towards the door that lead inside of the Tower, Harry followed her.

“Talk about messing up” Fleur said sadly as they walked down the stairs from the astronomy tower.

“Yeah” Harry agreed, he felt terrible for Fleur. Teachers weren’t strictly speaking supposed to have relationships with students and Harry knew that Fleur wanted badly to be a respectable teacher.

“But it wasn’t as we were kissing or any thing” Harry said.

“No, it’s much worse” Said Fleur grimly “For all they care we were sleeping together”

“Oh” was all Harry could say.

“And they probably think we are desperate enough to just do it up there” Fleur said. Harry didn’t know what to say, Fleur was right of course he could practically here Draco Malfoy’s voice taunting him. Harry led Fleur towards Gryffindor tower, they didn’t have to exchange words Harry knew that she was escorting him to bed.

“Aestas Caelum” Harry said loudly to the Fat Lady, she was sleeping soundly in her portrait.

“What... oh... enter” The fat lady said and flung open.

“Come on” Harry said to Fleur and pulled her inside.

“Wow, it’s nice in here” Fleur said “Some English men have a sense of taste after all”

“Yeah” Harry said and led her over to the middle of the common room
“This is my home”

“Yes, you mentioned that once or twice” Fleur said with a little grin, Harry knew that he had told Fleur more then once that he thought of Hogwarts as his home, but he couldn’t help it.

“Hmm, maybe I should start obliviate you” Harry said teasingly.

“Why don’t you try it” Fleur challenged.

“There” Harry said and rummaged in his pocket as if putting his wand back.

“What?” Fleur asked.

“I’ve just obliviated you” Harry lied.

“You’re so full of it” Fleur replied “Could you give me directions back to my office or I’ll be lost”

“I can do better than that” Harry said and walked up the stairs to his dorm. Fleur followed him but stopped outside his door.

“Oh come on I want you to know where I live” Harry said “Besides no one is awake”

“Right” Fleur said with a wicked grin and entered after Harry. The dormitory was very dark and not much could be seen besides the shapes of the five four-poster beds.

“Lumos” Harry said partly to be able to see and partly to tease Fleur.

“Cut it out” Fleur hissed and looked frantically around in the dorm.

“Relax” Harry whispered “They won’t wake up besides you are allowed in here as a teacher”

“This is my bed” Harry said as he walked over to his four-poster. He bent down on his knees beside his trunk and opened it.

“Found it yet?” Fleur asked. Harry had of course told her all about the Marauder’s map.

“Yeah” He replied, as he pulled the old parchment out of his trunk and handed it to Fleur. They walked down the stairs and Fleur tapped the map and said “I solemnly swear that I am up to no good”

“Wow” She muttered happily then her expression changed to serious “What’s Tonks doing wandering the corridors”

“Got to go Wingbeat” Fleur said hurriedly “See you at breakfast”

“Bye” Harry said, Fleur gave him a quick peck on his cheek and left Gryffindor tower.

Yep that was it, for this time! Next chapter is called Fame but I think that I might change the title it is not very suiting... Good night all!

Chapter 15 Breaking Love

Harry awoke as usual the next morning. Ron kept casting him curious glances, as they got dressed. He knew that Ron wanted him to tell him where he was last night, but he didn't want to tell Ron anything in front of his other class mates but then he remembered that Neville already knew luckily, Neville didn't say anything. They walked down the stairs to the common room as usual and found Hermione waiting for them with her nose in a book as usual.

"Harry" Hermione exclaimed as she saw them, when they got closer Hermione added in a whisper "Did you fall asleep?"

"Yes" Harry replied also in a whisper he wondered if Hermione knew something.

"With Fleur" Hermione asked still whispering.

"How did you know?" Harry asked back.

"Rumours about students who is dating a teacher travels fast especially if the student happens to be the-boy-who-lived" Hermione replied "and even more so if the entire sixth year Astronomy OWL class walks in on them"

"You slept with Fleur in the Astronomy tower" Ron asked eagerly with wide eyes.

"Yes" Harry replied "We fell asleep, but we didn't sleep with each other" Why did every one have to be so dirty minded?

"Oh" Ron said.

"You are going have trouble to explain that" Hermione stated sympathetically.

"Poor Fleur" Harry sighed. They walked down to breakfast and once more every one was whispering about him, some even pointed. He could see Draco Malfoy smirking at him from the Slytherin table. He didn't care much though he was much to worried about how Fleur would take it. But to his relief Fleur didn't seem to care much when

she entered the great hall, she walked straight up to the staff with Tonks. Harry noticed that most boys didn't seem to think any less of Fleur because of the night's events, most girls did however. Harry caught Fleur's eye for a moment before she began to eat. She gave him a small smile before she turned to her breakfast.

"So" Harry said changing the subject "how is our little Malfoy doing"

"I have no idea" Hermione replied viciously.

"Did you see her at all yesterday?" Harry asked.

"Yes" Hermione said firmly.

"And" Harry pressed on.

"Why don't you just go and ask Ginny" Hermione snapped.

"I don't think that would be a good idea, can't you tell me" said Harry, he normally wouldn't press Hermione like this but he was in bad mood.

"Well if you have to know Selena won't talk to me" Hermione said "She prefers Ginny"

"Why" Asked Ron with his mouth full of egg.

"Promise you won't fly off the handle, Selena is a Gryffindor after all"

"Okay, tell me" Ron said.

"She prefers Ginny because she is a pure blood" said Hermione sadly "said she didn't have to make matters worse by spending time with someone like me"

"So it's her fault that her parents brainwashed her when it's old Mrs Black's fault that Kreacher turned out as he did" Harry spat, he couldn't help it he just felt angry. Hermione didn't reply and after a moment Harry muttered "Sorry, Fleur must be rubbing off on me"

"Well you are right Harry, it's just well she kind of seems so innocent somehow and she gets to me" Hermione explained smiling weakly.

“Let’s get to charms” Ron said and got up.

They entered the charms corridor on third floor first. They had 15 minutes to kill before class started. Flitwick was one of those teachers that left the door to the classroom open so they entered and managed to get the best seats.

“McGonagall came over to talk to me during dinner” Ron stated as he pulled his battered copy of Standard Book of spell Newt Edition from his bag.

“She asked me if...” Ron said but trailed off, it was very nice of Ron to be concerned that Harry should be disappointed not being Quidditch captain.

“Captain?” Harry pretended to guess.

“Yes” Ron replied “But it should have been you, you’ve been on the team since first year”

“Congratulations” Harry said calmly, Ron and Hermione exchanged a nervous glance as if expecting him to blow any second.

“The part I like of Quidditch is the flying part” Harry said truthfully, he had no particular urge to hold speeches and book the Quidditch pitch all the time, but it would of course have been an honour to be the Quidditch captain.

“You okay with it” Ron asked and smiled “Wonder why she chose me”

“You’re good at chess I suppose” Harry lied smoothly.

“Yeah” Hermione said “bet she expects you to come up with tricky strategies”

“Thanks” Ron muttered, grumpily. He didn’t want people expecting things from him.

“You better let Ginny on the team, you know”

“Yeah” Ron said “Bet she knows how to the cruciatus curse”

Harry nodded.

“Don’t be stupid” Hermione said “She doesn’t enjoy seeing people in pain”

“Yes she does” Said Ron heavily “Especially if I don’t let her on the team”

“It’s not enough to hate someone for a reason” Harry stated remembering all to clear the night in the ministry of magic when he had tried the curse.

“Oh hail to the dark lords” Ron said and bowed to them at the same moment the door swung open and Draco Malfoy entered together with Pansy Parkinson and some other Slytherins.

“Trying to save your reputation by turning up early for class, Potter?” Draco asked the Slytherins sniggered.

“Azkaban” Ron coughed loudly Draco turned on him.

“What’s that” Draco Malfoy hissed.

“I happened to cough” Ron said and paused for a short moment and then added coolly “at the same time as I said Azkaban” Draco Malfoy turned white, Ron grinned widely.

“You will be sorry Weasley”

“Oh yeah” Harry replied “You’ve been saying that for more then five years”

Draco Malfoy didn’t reply.

“You’re lucky there aren’t any dementors there because I don’t think your old dad could have survived this long otherwise” Harry said, it was not often that Harry could get to Draco as much as Draco usually got to him this was one of those rare occasions. Harry enjoyed every second of it. Then he remembered that Fleur had told him not to get into any fights or people would know that she favoured him. He would have to take a dive.

“At least I have a father” Malfoy spat furiously.

Harry wanted to tell Malfoy that if he had a father like his it would be better not to have one at all, but he didn't. He sat quiet biting his lip to keep calm.

“And a mother too” Added Ron as if Draco Malfoy's parents were a big joke “And she isn't even in Azkaban”

“Oh how nice to see that my first students have already arrived” Professor Flitwick said happily as he entered the room “Sit down on your seats and we can practise some summoning charms while we wait for your classmates” Harry thought this a rather odd request but was thankful for any excuse for not talking to the Slytherins.

“Mr Potter why don't you go first” Flitwick said this was even odder since Harry was sitting between Ron and Hermione and normally Flitwick would start with who ever sat at one end of the classroom.

“Right” Harry said and pulled out his wand.

“Good, summon this book” Flitwick said, Harry now understood why Flitwick wanted to try summoning charms Fleur must have told him about what happened to her office door.

“Accio” Harry cried and the book flew over to him.

“Excellent Mr Potter” Flitwick said happily even though it was a very simple charm for their year “Now why don't you summon it Mr Malfoy” Malfoy who was sitting at the far end of the room summoned the book with out problems, this continued until the classroom was full.

“First of all I want to tell you all how very proud I am to have so many talented students” Flitwick said “I am really happy that you have decided to take another two years of charms. We will mostly this term go through the charms in your assigned book and next term we will be studying how to enchant objects such as chilling pitchers. In your final year will we continue to work on enchantments and maybe if we have time charm our own brooms, before your NEWTs we will also go through rituals and basic ward raising...”

Hermione couldn't have looked happier as she scribbled down the course goals in unusual, even for her, neat and well shaped letters.

"... Those of you who might be interested in becoming a healer will have the opportunity to go on a field trip with Madam Pomfrey to St Mungo's Hospital for Magical Maladies and Injuries..."

Hermione smiled even wider at these words, Harry knew that she didn't really want to become a healer but that she found the prospect of a field trip more then exiting.

"... Please stay back after class if you are interested" Flitwick finished his speech.

They had a very funny charms lesson braking things and then repairing them with magic. As the lesson went on, they repaired more and more complex objects. Hermione managed to repair a whole tea set with twelve cups with one wave of her wand and there by earning Gryffindor ten points. At the end of the lesson, they received almost as much homework as they got from McGonagall. Harry now begun to hope that the rest of the teachers wouldn't pile so much home work on them or he would have to sit all the weekend with it. Hermione stayed back after class together with a Hufflepuff and some Rawenclaws to sign up for the field trip. Harry hesitated for a moment it would be fun to go on a field trip but then figured that he wouldn't be allowed without a guard. Ron seemed to be thinking along the same lines because he glanced at over at Harry.

"We could just stay here and play Quidditch or something"

"Yeah" Harry replied, he was very grateful that Ron decided to stay with him.

Ron and Hermione argued during lunch over whether or whether not to Quidditch were more important then homework. Ron stated that with every that went on they needed something to take their minds off things. Hermione stated just as firmly that their education was much more important with everything that went on. Harry gave up on trying making them behave, he figured that he should be happy for them and let them have their love arguments. He ate his lunch in silence trying to ignore them. When he had finished his food he got bored, he

looked up at the staff table where Fleur and Tonks usually sat but they weren't there. He decided for a moment to go and read Dueling for Masters but then he remembered that it Fleur had borrowed it. Then it struck him, he had not informed the DA about the dueling club. With a quick accio, he had his galleon that he used to summon Dumbledore Army. He set the date to September 3rd and the time to seven pm. He watched the different members of the DA to see if they had noticed and if they even carried their galleon. Ron and Hermione seemed to be carrying their galleons because they stopped arguing and looked over at him. Several students in the great hall looked over at him curiously it seemed as if most of them had hoped that he should summon them and there for had brought their galleon with them.

"Seven" Ron read from his galleon and looked curiously over at Harry.

"Yepp" Harry replied shortly.

"You are starting DA again?" Hermione whispered.

Harry smiled "I'll tell you later"

"Come on Harry" Ron said and then added in a slow hypnotic voice "We are you're friends Harry you can trust us Harry we wont hurt you Harry trust us... trust us"

Harry laughed "All right, no I'm not starting DA again"

"But we had so much fun" Hermione exclaimed sadly hoping to change his mind.

"We'll have fun this year too" Harry said with a smile.

"What are you not telling us" Ron asked.

"Is this something to do with Fleur and Tonks?" Hermione asked piercing him with her gaze.

"Maybe" Harry replied, trying to keep his face unreadable.

“You said maybe when Dean asked you if Fleur was your girlfriend” Ron stated “So what’s up with you, Fleur and Tonks”

“Now I know how Hagrid feels” Harry said jokingly, but Ron and Hermione didn’t seem to think this was the time for jokes they watched him expectantly.

“I’ll tell you in about six and a half hour” Harry said glancing down at his watch. “Don’t look at me like that. I want it to be a surprise”

“Right” Hermione said dropping the subject “Promise me that you will do your homework while I am in History of Magic”

“What?” Ron asked.

“I said...”

“I heard what you said” Ron interrupted Hermione. Harry could tell that Ron was building up another argument.

“Fine we will do our Charms homework” Harry said to shut them both up, he couldn’t take another argument.

Ron and Hermione looked over at him as if he was interrupting them. Harry smiled innocently “Did I interrupt something?”

Hermione blushed slightly and looked down on her plate.

“What’s with you two” Ron asked “Why are you” he looked at Harry “saying odd stuff and why do you” He turned to Hermione “blush when he does”

“I have to go to History of Magic, see you later” Said Hermione quickly and ran off. Harry wondered if he was being too evil.

“Right you tell me” Ron said firmly and turned to Harry “What’s with her”

“I can’t” Harry said he really thought that this was something Ron had to figure out for himself or at the very least be told by Hermione.

“So you and Hermione know something. Why can’t I” Ron said irritably.

“Sorry” Harry said.

“She’s my girlfriend and you are my best friend” Ron exclaimed.

“That’s just it I’m Hermione’s best friend too and this is something she has to tell you” Harry said, he hoped that Ron wouldn’t be too angry with him.

“You do love Fleur right” asked Ron nervously.

“Yes” Harry replied and added as reassuringly as he could “there is nothing like that between me and Hermione”

“What then”

Harry took a deep breath “Just drop it, you’ll figure it out”

“Tell me” Ron demanded.

“It’s a girlfriend boyfriend thing” Harry exclaimed “it’s none of my business”

“So how come you know?” Ron asked angrily.

“Because you two are my best friends” Harry said “Let’s just drop this”

“No if something is going on, I have the right to know” Ron said loudly.

“Be quiet” Harry hissed “I told you this is something between you and your girlfriend”

“Fine” Ron said in a very Hermioneish way “But she better tell me”

“Have you told her you love her” Harry asked Ron quietly, he doubted that Hermione would tell Ron if they hadn’t even admitted that they love each other.

“No” Ron said nervously “How did you tell Fleur?”

"I really didn't have much choice" Harry confessed "I had to tell her... because of Bill"

"Oh"

"So when are you going to tell her?"

"Soon" Said Ron as if he was speaking of his own death.

"Don't worry about it" Harry said trying to cheer Ron up.

Ron looked down on his plate "You, think she... Do you think I... I have a chance?" Ron asked and blushed furiously.

"Of course you do, you are a prefect" Harry joked.

Ron didn't look amused "Seriously Harry"

"Yes I think you have a chance" Harry said, he didn't want to make it too easy for Ron by telling him Hermione loved him back, it should be Hermione who told him that she loved him.

"Sure?" Ron asked nervously.

"Positive" Harry replied.

Ron smiled slightly "Right now we better do the charms homework that you promised"

They worked for hours in the library, as did most of the other OWL students who didn't have lessons. Hermione joined them when she was done with History of Magic though she started on her Transfiguration homework.

"I though you did that yesterday?" Harry asked Hermione. Ron and Hermione exchanged a quick glance.

"Right don't answer that" Harry said and continued to write on his essay. Flitwick expected four roles of parchment on every possible way of repairing object with Magic.

"If this is what we get from Flitwick, can you imagine Snape" Ron said and shuddered.

"Yeah" Harry agreed "Bet he adds even more because of us"

"Look at the bright side we would learn loads" Hermione said "and we wouldn't have to worry about our NEWTs"

"How are we supposed to do the rest of our homework if we have to Potions homework all the time" Ron exclaimed disbelievingly.

"Maybe if you do it on time and don't go out flying all the time it would be a lot easier" Hermione retorted and then when she realised that she had just started an argument with Ron she looked over at Harry apologetically.

"Now you are doing it again" Ron said accusingly.

"If you can't keep a civil voice I will have to ask you to get out" Madam Pince said from behind them.

"Sorry" Ron and Hermione muttered.

"Now tell me" Ron hissed fiercely at them.

"It's just a stupid thing Ron" Hermione said softly.

"Then tell me" Ron hissed.

"Please" Hermione begged sweetly "can we discuss this later"

"Sure" Ron replied mesmerised by her sweetness.

They continued on their homework until dinnertime only occasionally asking each other for advice. They bored Hermione thoroughly during dinner with Quidditch. Ron had now realised that he really was the Quidditch captain and wanted out of it before it became his fault that Gryffindor lost the cup. Harry and Hermione were able to persuade him not to go to McGonagall and resign and instead hold Quidditch tryouts. After dinner, they decided to go and find the room of requirements even though it was almost thirty minutes left until the

DA meeting begun. They found however that several other members of the DA had decided to do the same. In fact, every one was there except Ginny and last years seven years. Marietta Edgecombe, Cho's friend who had told on them last term wasn't there either of course.

"Hello all" Harry said stupidly as he entered.

There was a rumble of noise as every one greeted back.

"Thanks for the book" Harry said awkwardly "It's really good"

"Yes of course" said Luna Lovegood in her far away voice "The author was the last living relative of Merlin"

"Oh" Harry replied in lack of a better answer. He seriously doubted that Merlin ever even had children.

"So when can we see it?" Ernie Macmillan asked eagerly.

"I lent it to Fle..." Harry begun but stopped himself as he realised that he should call Fleur Professor Delacour. Cho snorted, and the rest of the DA smiled knowingly at him.

"I lent it to Professor Delacour"

"Oh come on Harry you can call her Fleur in front of us" Lavender said smiling widely "We all think it's great that you have a girlfriend"

"We knew you didn't sleep with each other" Parvati added when Harry didn't reply.

"You do?" Harry asked uncertainly.

"We saw you" Lavender said "We were there, didn't you see us?"

"Oh" Harry said he took a deep breath of relief "Thanks"

"So we are continuing with the DA?" Ernie Macmillan asked irritably, he clearly didn't think girlfriends belonged in the DA.

"I'll tell you when Ginny gets here" Harry replied. They had fun talking about what they had done during the summer and Harry told them all about how McGonagall had cleared her throat in court when she had witnessed against Umbridge.

At seven o'clock Ginny entered the room wearing a very stern expression quite unlike her normal.

"So what's up" Ginny asked sharply.

"Uh" Harry said uncertainly, he found himself lost for words.

"Are you starting the DA again" Ginny asked still with an edge to her voice.

"No" Harry replied.

"No DA?" Neville asked urgently.

"No, Professor Delacour and Tonks have agreed on doing something together with us" Harry said.

"What?" Colin Creevey asked eagerly.

"We are starting a dueling club" Harry announced.

"A dueling club" Ron asked "Like the one with Lockhart and Snape"

"I think it is brilliant" Hermione said and interrupted Ron "That way every one can learn to defend themselves, not just us"

"Yeah it will be fun" Ginny said dreamily "to seriously curse someone not just practise disarming or stunning" Harry was stunned by this statement he had never thought he would hear Ginny say that she wanted to curse anyone, maybe she was up to the cruciatus curse after all.

"Yeah" Justin agreed "They won't stand a chance after all our practise"

It was agreed that a dueling club would be a good idea and they couldn't help them self from spending the two following hours practising hexes and jinxes that would be useful in the dueling club.

"Welcome to Hogwarts Defence Against the Dark Arts 6th year NEWT class" Fleur said as they sat down in defence against the dark arts class room the following morning. Every student who had managed to get an E in their Defence against the dark arts OWL was there, it was a huge class. Draco Malfoy and most of his Slytherin friends was there except Crabbe and Goyle, which Ron said this was a pity since it would be fun to see them embarrass themselves.

"I am professor Delacour and this is Professor Tonks" Fleur said and Tonks nodded a hello. "We will teach you this year how to lift curses from dark artefact, those of you who plan to become curse breakers should there for pay extra attention"

Tonks nodded importantly behind Fleur and turned her face into a something like a goblin's. There were snorts of laughter and Fleur looked over at Tonks. "Very funny Tonks, now let me get the class's attention" Tonks changed her face back to normal and Fleur continued "Next term we will start on removing curses from each other and practise throwing off the imperius curse"

"Any questions" Tonks asked brightly "We are more qualified then we look you know"

There was another snort of laughter from the students.

"How come there are two of you then" Pansy Parkinson asked.

"Because there are so many off you to take this class" Tonks replied and then added with an evil smirk "But don't worry dear when we are done there won't be so many of you left"

Harry knew that Tonks was joking of course but not every one seemed to be too sure off that, some students seemed to think she might be as crazy as Umbridge.

"I was top of my year in Defence against the dark arts and have worked the last year as a curse breaker. Professor Tonks here is a

fully qualified auror and has worked for the ministry since she left school” Fleur said as she didn’t seem too pleased with Tonks answer.

Harry could hear a Ravenclaw mutter “Not another auror”

“I am also part veela and Tonks is as you know a Metamorphmagus” Fleur said and Tonks couldn’t resist letting hair grow out of her nose as if bored by Fleur’s speech.

“Any more questions about us or the course plan?” Fleur asked as Tonks vanished her nose hair and rubbed her nose furiously as if it tickled badly. There were more snorts of laughter especially from the female part of the students as most boys focused too hard on Fleur and hadn’t even noticed Tonks nose hair. Harry was uncomfortable with the way most boys stared at Fleur but he couldn’t really blame them, she was a part veela after all.

“Very well then male prefects please step forward and hand these mirrors out to your house mates” Fleur said and Draco Malfoy, Anthony Goldstein, Ernie Macmillan and Ron stepped forward and pick up a pile of mirrors each from the desk in front.

“Tonks have cursed these mirrors and I want you to break it using pages five to forty eight in your books. If you find out how to break the curse please keep it to yourself” Fleur said “A piece of advice is don’t make it harder then it is”

“Wow” Harry’s mirror exclaimed in a female voice as it saw him “You are so HOT!”

Harry looked up at Hermione in pure surprise, she giggled at him as Ron handed her a mirror.

“Are you an angel of some kind” Hermione’s mirror asked in a male voice “I’ve never seen anyone as good looking as you”

“Don’t look at her” Harry’s mirror said angrily as he was watching Hermione.

“Sorry” Harry said utterly bewildered.

"It's all right sweetie I know I'm the only one for you I just got a little jealous" Harry's mirror purred "I'll always love you, green eyes"

He looked up at Tonks to get some kind of explanation from her. Tonks was biting her lip very hard not to burst out laughing. She had obviously charmed the mirrors to seem to love who ever looked into them.

"I know this might be a bit sudden darling... but I have been thinking and I really know what I want, what I need. Will you marry me?" Harry's mirror asked, Harry couldn't help gaping at it.

Once the initial shock of having a mirror loving you and telling you off for looking at anything else then it, they had a great time. Harry soon figured out that the best way of breaking the curse would be to simply break the mirror and then repair it again. He got the idea from Riddle's diary, he could technically repair it so that it didn't have a hole in it but Tom Riddle's memories were gone forever they had pored out of it in form of ink.

"If you have figured out how to break it" Tonks said "Write it up on this piece of paper and continue to read your books"

Harry and Hermione were the first one to write on the paper a little while later Draco Malfoy some Ravenclaws and a Hufflepuff, then Ron and Lavender.

"All right Mr Potter you are first on the list, would you like to show us how to break it" Tonks said at the end of the class.

"Yes" Harry replied and slammed his mirror to the floor. A horrible ear-splitting scream filled the room.

"Normally you place a silencing charm on the artefact before you end it" Fleur said as the scream died out.

"I'll remember that Professor" Harry said, there were some sniggers especially from the Slytherins but Harry ignored them and so did Fleur.

“Reparo” Harry said firmly and waved his wand at the pieces of the mirror. They flew back together and the mirror became as good as new with a quick accio he held the mirror in his hand.

“Excellent” Fleur said “Ten pointes to Gryffindor, five for every one on this list who had a correct solution. Homework until next week; please describe the different ways of breaking curses placed on objects. I want at least four rolls of parchment... dismissed!”

“Got your girlfriend to tell you how to do it before class?” Draco Malfoy said as when they were out of any teachers hearing.

“No” Harry replied shortly.

“Don’t tell me you figured that out by yourself” Pansy Parkinson said.

“I did” Harry replied as calmly as he could.

“Ignore them” Hermione whispered and pulled him and Ron along towards the great hall.

Everyone talked excitedly about their defence against the dark arts lesson on their way down to lunch, they all thought that the mirrors had been very funny and was looking forward for the next lesson even though they would have to write four rolls of parchment until then.

Harry and Hermione helped Ron to put up a notice on the Gryffindor notice board. It said that Quidditch tryouts for two chasers would be held on Saturday afternoon. It had been very hard to replace Fred and George last year they had been forced to pick those who had any flying talent at all even though they barley could swing a bat at the same time as they were flying. Now the hopes fell very much on the second years and Ginny. Ron drowned his worries in his homework, which was a good indicator on of how nervous he was. They worked tirelessly all day and managed to finish their Charms and Defence against the dark arts assay before dinner. Hermione was beaming at Ron when she found out and Harry decided to go down to dinner early to give them some privacy.

After dinner Hermione curiously enough agreed to exchange notes with them, they let her read their essays in exchange for her transfigurations essay. Hermione had of course loads of corrections and pointers for them. The evening progressed slowly in the library, with help of Hermione's Transfiguration essay Harry and Ron managed to complete their transfiguration homework too. Though Hermione read theirs and made sure that they didn't directly copy hers and that they knew what they were writing about.

Wasn't that fun! Well I thought so anyway... you didn't seriously think Fleur would propose did you?

Chapter 16 Hogwarts as usual

They found out the following morning that Snape was just as nasty as they had feared.

"You will find that most of you will leave this class and not come back" Snape hissed and glared at the non Slytherin part of the class. Draco Malfoy smirked delightedly together with the rest of the Slytherins. Harry was sure that not even half of them had managed to get Os in their potion OWL.

"We will be brewing antidotes and testing them this term... And you better get them right" He added and glared at Harry "Get your cauldrons we will be making an antidote to most snake venoms. Instructions are on the blackboard and ingredients are in the store cupboard. You got until lunch!"

"Potter you sit here in front so you don't get help from your fans" Snape said, Draco Malfoy sniggered. Harry took a deep breath picked up his cauldron and bag and walked over to the table closest to Snape. It was a very complex hybrid potion they had to brew. They would have to combine two different potions and then add the final ingredient: powdered dragon blood.

"You know Potter" Snape whispered as he prepared his ingredients for the first of the two potions that he would need to combine "I don't know how you tricked that OWL inspector but you don't fool me. I am going to make sure that you regret cheating" Snape paused hoping to get a reaction out of him.

Harry tried to focus hard on crushing his beetle eyes so hard that he wouldn't hear Snape's voice.

"We will be testing your antidote at the end of the class you better get it right or you will spend weeks in the hospital wing" Snape said dangerously "I am going to give you a fair chance Potter, I'm going to leave you alone to do your best"

Harry didn't reply he had once been poisoned by snake venom. That time he had been sure that he was going to die, the mere memory gave him goose bumps. He just had to get this potion right. He copied

the formula down on parchment to be able to follow it more carefully and tick off the lines he had done. He groaned involuntarily when he looked over the recipe, he had never managed a so advanced potion before. He wondered for a moment if it all was just a big joke and then he realised that it probably was Snape and the Slytherins was going to laugh their heads off when his antidote didn't work. He tried to pull himself together, he would need to focus on his potion, and after all, he had a chance as Snape had said. The potion was supposed to turn from red to clear green when you added the powdered dragon blood. Harry's potion turned from brown to dark green, he knew he had added all the ingredient right but he guessed that he should have been a bit more careful with the timing. The only other potion that was green was Hermione's but hers was bright she beamed at him proudly from her seat she didn't know he was to be poisoned. He hoped that his potion was good enough not poison him and perhaps even if he was lucky cure him.

"Now everyone" Snape said gleefully "Potter here is as noble as ever" every one in the class looked up at Snape and Harry "our own wonder boy has agreed to try out his antidote"

Hermione and Ron gaped in horror while the Slytherins smiled expectantly.

"I have for the occasion a mild dose of Basilisk venom that would normally send him to the hospital wing for weeks" Snape said "But since Potter has his antidote he will not be in any direct danger"

Laughter burst out from the Slytherin side of the room led by Pansy Parkinson's shriek of glee. The other side was dead silent. Ron looked as if he wanted to run up to Harry and pull him away from Snape, but Hermione managed to contain him. Harry was a bit surprised by Hermione's coolness but then he guessed that she must think that his antidote is good enough.

"Drink this Mr Potter" Snape said and added in an undertone "Or get out and never become an auror"

Harry was stunned he didn't have any choice if he wanted to become an auror, besides he would look like a coward if he ran for it. There was only one thing to do he grabbed the vial was holding in his right

hand. He drank it all down in one gulp, readying himself for the pain that was to come. He felt a headache starting to build up but it wasn't too bad but then he had just swallowed it. He waited for another few moments the Slytherins was watching him expectantly, Ron seemed to be waiting for him to collapse on the spot but Hermione had a smile building up on her face. Harry was a bit irritated by this he didn't want her to worry too much about him but a little compassion wouldn't be wrong.

"Well" Snape asked irritably.

"My head hurts a bit" Harry said.

"Nothing more" Snape spat.

"No nothing" Harry replied he was glad to hear the anger in Snape's voice, hopefully Snape had made a mistake. He felt a small smile spread across his lips as he thought this even his headache didn't seem so bad anymore in fact he couldn't even feel it anymore.

Hermione smiled even wider now, Harry knew that she must have expected this. He glanced over at the Slytherins and smiled triumphantly at them, they had lost their smiles now instead they were glaring at him.

"Have you drunk your antidote?" Snape asked glancing over at Harry's cauldron.

"No" Harry said and then added teasingly "Professor"

Hermione now had a wide smile across her face unfortunately Snape saw this. Hermione seemed to see what was coming because she hurriedly filled a vial with her antidote.

"Get up here Granger" Snape hissed at her so snake like that Harry almost thought he could be a parselmouth.

Hermione grabbed her vial and walked up to Snape and Harry. Harry wasn't really worried about Hermione he knew that she had done her antidote properly. Hermione seemed to be confident that her antidote

would work too because she held out her hand to get the poison from him.

"I'll hold your cure Granger" Snape said and took it from her and handed her a vial with poison. Hermione cast an uncertain glance at Harry before she drank the poison. The affect was instantaneous Hermione turned pale as a ghost and started to sweat, she looked as if she had been suffering from a high fever for days. Snape gave a triumphant look around at the Slytherins who applauded.

"Give Hermione her antidote" Ron yelled furiously at Snape and ran over to Hermione and held her. Harry would have said something himself but Ron beat him to it.

"Fifty points from Gryffindor" Snape said wickedly and then turned back to the class ignoring Ron "As you can see Basilisk venom is highly poisonous a single drop of it would kill a full grown man. What I have given Miss Granger here is just about one tenth of that"

"ACCIO ANTIDOTE" Ron yelled and summoned Hermione's antidote from Snape's hand. Ron quickly poured the vial down Hermione's throat.

"Detention for a month Weasley and another fifty points" Snape said triumphantly and the Slytherins sniggered appreciative.

"You better give Hermione a hundred house points for her antidote then" Ron replied furiously "And if you think I give a damn about your detention"

"Get out Weasley and don't come back" Snape said smilingly as if he had planned to days lesson to get rid of the unwanted students.

Ron made a quick check that Hermione was okay and when he seemed satisfied, he got his bag and left without a word. Hermione did look much better now though her face was still shiny with sweat.

"You got a problem with my teaching methods as well" Snape asked Harry hoping to get a reason to throw him out too. Harry had a big problem with Snape's teaching methods he would have done the same thing as Ron but Ron did it first. Harry kept trying to focus on

Fleur to get his anger to fade and he was quite successful too. One year ago, he would probably have cursed Snape by now but this year he had more than detentions to fear he wanted very badly to teach the dueling club with Tonks and Fleur and it wouldn't be possible if he cursed Snape.

"No" Harry replied shortly focusing harder than ever on Fleur and what it felt like to hold her. He tried to imagine holding her hand tightly so that he could feel her soft heart beat. He felt much calmer now, he took a deep breath and the last of his anger seemed to fade.

"I said get back to your seat Potter" Snape hissed and Hermione pulled his hand to make him move.

"Right" Harry replied calmly and walked back to his seat.

They wrote their name on bottles with their potion and handed in to Snape and then cleaned up after themselves.

"Homework until next week" Snape said "I want four roles of parchment on basic antidotes. Potter I want another four roles from you describing why you didn't get poisoned"

Harry who still thought of Fleur managed to stay seated even if he wanted to stand up and yell all sort of insults at Snape. Instead, he decided to go straight to McGonagall after class and ask if there was some kind of report to fill out if you wanted to complain about a teacher.

Harry and Hermione left the classroom together a few moments later.

"Where do you think Ron have gone" Hermione asked worriedly.

"I don't know" Harry replied "I'm going straight to McGonagall"

"Yes" Hermione agreed grimly.

"Are you all right" Harry asked as he suddenly remembered that Hermione had been poisoned.

"Yes of course I am you don't think I would have let him poison me if I wouldn't be okay?" Hermione asked raising an eyebrow.

"Well I let him poison me" Harry muttered he now felt rather stupid that he let Snape poison him. He should just have refused and accepted a detention or something, but then again the poison had not affected him.

"I suppose you became immune down in the chamber"

"Then you must be immune to it as well now" Harry stated.

"No, I don't think so" Hermione said "If you got immune to basilisk venom by just exposing yourself to it everyone would know"

"But I got..."

"That's different you were bitten" Hermione said.

"Pierced" Harry muttered "So if you get bitten by a basilisk you get immune"

"I don't know I doubt that there are many peoples that have actually been bitten by a basilisk and I bet that those who survive a basilisk bite... I haven't even read of anyone being bitten by a basilisk"

"Then how did you guess that I wasn't going to be poisoned" Harry asked as they walked the final set of stairs up from the dungeons.

"I wasn't sure but many magical poisons work that way" Hermione said simply.

They reached McGonagall office and the door swung open before Harry or Hermione had time to knock.

"Did you want something?" McGonagall asked a bit surprised to see them standing right outside her door.

"uh... yes Professor" Hermione said "We just had potions"

"Snape tried to poison me with and..." Harry exclaimed.

“Did you lose your temper?” McGonagall interrupted “Potter you will have too...”

“No” Hermione interrupted. McGonagall eyed Hermione curiously she normally hated when peoples interrupted her but as Hermione were her favourite student and she didn’t seem to mind too much.

“Why don’t you come inside” McGonagall said and step aside and let them enter. She conjured an extra chair for them since she only had two chairs in her office, one behind her desk and one for visitors.

“You had potions?” McGonagall asked.

“Yes Professor” Hermione said eagerly, Hermione always loved to have a professors full attention even if the subject was not regarding schoolwork.

“We were a making a common antidote base and had dragons blood as the final ingredient” Hermione said “At the end of the class Snape announced that Harry would be testing his antidote and poisoned him with basilisk venom”

“He did” McGonagall asked “Your antidote worked very well then Potter?”

“Actually no” Hermione said “The poison didn’t affect Harry I think that’s because he was bitten down in the chamber”

McGonagall eyed Harry curiously “Yes, that seems like a logical explanation”

“I was smiling at Harry when it didn’t poison him” Hermione explained “And Snape seemed to think that I was smiling at him so he decided to poison me too”

McGonagall didn’t say anything, though Harry could tell that she didn’t like the way Snape poisoned her house students.

“I got really ill” Hermione said “And Snape wouldn’t give me the antidote at once so Ron got very upset and yelled at him to give me

my antidote but he wouldn't instead he took fifty points from us and started to explain how poisonous Basilisk venom was"

McGonagall had drawn her mouth into a thin line Harry could tell that she was furious at Snape.

"Ron didn't care he summoned my vial with antidote from Snape and gave it to me" Hermione said and took a deep breath and continued "Snape took another fifty points and gave Ron detention for a month"

"But Ron didn't care he told Snape that he better give a hundred house points for Hermione's antidote then" Harry said angrily "But he didn't care so Snape told him to get out and not come back"

"Neither of you got any points for being poisoned" McGonagall asked.

"No" Hermione said and added sadly "If Ron doesn't take his potion NEWTs then he can't become an auror" This thought had not occurred to Harry, the auror future didn't seem half as funny without Ron.

McGonagall sighed "I'll see what I can do, but I can't promise anything professor Snape is a very good and well respected teacher"

The three of them left for lunch Harry and Hermione walked over to the Gryffindor table. Harry caught sight of Selena Malfoy for the first time since the sorting she was sitting next to Ginny and some other fifth years. He glanced over to the other side of the great hall to the Slytherin table and saw that Draco Malfoy was watching them angrily. Apparently the joy of Ron been thrown out of potions was forgotten. He sat down next to Hermione at their usual seats and looked up at the staff table, Fleur smiled at him he smiled back and then he looked over at Snape who focus to one hundred percent on his food. McGonagall sat down at her usual seat, later along the table he saw Hagrid who had just finished lunch and was getting up.

"Care of Magical Creatures Next" Harry stated as he started lunch with a huge glass of pumpkin juice.

"Yeah" Hermione replied distractedly also starting with something to drink "Do you think Ron's all right? I bet he's really miserable"

“Probably” Harry greed.

“I got to go and find him” Hermione said and got up “can I borrow your map?”

“Sorry but I lent it to Fleur when she couldn’t find her way back from Gryffindor tower” Harry explained “I would help you look for him, but I bet he wants to be found by you”

Hermione smiled slightly in a very girlish way “Got any idea of where he is?”

“Nope” He said and then after a moment of though he added “You might want to try the Quidditch pitch though”

“See you at Care” Hermione said and ran off to find Ron. Hermione’s and Harry’s friendship had changed Harry realised, they spoke openly to each other about their love lives and had in a way become even closer. Ever since that night in Grimmauld place they leaned heavily on each other perhaps that’s because none of them had any siblings, or close relatives around at least.

Harry enjoyed a quiet meal. It was very unusual for him to be able to eat an entire meal in silence in the great hall. He wondered if McGonagall would manage to do something about Snape and if Ron would continue taking potions if he was allowed. Hermione could probably persuade Ron if she wanted too. Then he wondered what Snape might do to them next week, if he had another potion class like this one he might just give up on it. After all most order members were not aurors, he could become a curse breaker like Fleur it was not perhaps as exiting or fun as an auror but it was a good job and maybe Ron could become a curse breaker too. He tried to imagine life as a curse breaker with Ron and Fleur for a few moments but then he remembered that to become a curse breaker they required Arithmancy. He sighted and took a gulp of his pumpkin juice he didn’t want to become a curse breaker anyway he wanted to be an auror and if a stupid greasy haired git tried to stop him or Ron.

The sorting hat can’t have been so far off in his first year Harry realised as he seriously considered putting Snape under the imperius curse. He didn’t really have to make Snape do anything he didn’t

wand to. Just let Ron back into his potion class and behave just a little bit better. He would allow Snape to take house points of them as usual as long as it wasn't a hundred points every lesson and he could stand Snape passing snide remarks at him during class as long as they were about him alone and not his friends or relatives. He knew perfectly well how to cast the imperius curse he had read all about in Dueling for Masters. All the unforgivables required more than the incantation you had to focus hard on something. To perform the imperius curse you had to focus really hard on feeling superior to the subject. Harry couldn't imagine having any problems feeling superior to Snape. It was a risk however that the order would test Snape if he was under the imperius, so it would be best if Snape had no idea who had put it on him in case anyone found out. After a few moments, he remembered that he had an invisibility cloak and he could make sure that no one was around on his map. All he would have to do was to wait outside Snape's office one night wearing his father's old cloak and curse Snape when he left his office. An even better and cooler way would be to just knock on Snape's office door and cast the imperius curse on him when he opened. He decided to practise the imperius curse later, in any case it would be a handy curse to know illegal or not. The fact that it was illegal didn't bother him too much he wasn't going to use it to do any harm, it wasn't even painful besides he was tired of being the victim all the time if there was going to be trouble with Snape he might as well be the one causing it not just suffering from it.

He finished his lunch and walked up to his dorm he emptied his bag of his potion equipments and put his copy *Befriending Beasts* in it instead. He had half an hour before care of magical creatures started and he hoped that Hagrid would have time for a little chat before class. A few minutes later, he was standing outside Hagrid's hut knocking on his door. Fang barked madly inside and seemed to be trying to open the door.

"Easy there, get back" Hagrid's voice boomed through the door "Get back Fang, get back!"

Hagrid opened the door Fang burst out and jumped up on Harry with his front paws almost knocking Harry to the ground.

“Hello Fang” Harry said as he forced Fang off him. Fang really was a very nice dog, just a little too large and a bit too keen on greeting.

“Hey there Harry” Hagrid said happily “Where is Ron and Hermione”

“Something came up” Harry said “They kind of spend time together these days”

Hagrid chuckled “Heard you spend some time together as well”

Harry blushed.

“I would ask you in for tea, but I figure you just had lunch”

“Yeah” Harry said, his mind drifted over to Snape “Would it be wrong to do a bad thing if only good came out of it”

Hagrid eyed him curiously from inside his house “I suppose, if you mean well... hold on it’s nothing illegal is it?”

“No” Harry lied too quickly.

Harry could tell by the way Hagrid looked at him that he didn’t believe him. Hagrid gave him a sad look as if he thought Harry trusted him.

“Well kind off” Harry said he could not bear Hagrid sad look “And it should be” he added darkly as he imagined Snape putting the imperius curse on him.

Hagrid smiled “I trust you not to do anything stupid Harry”

They stood in silence for a moment before Hagrid glanced inside at his old wall clock. “Oh better prepare your lesson”

“Can I help” Harry asked, he always felt rather left out when Ron and Hermione spent time together and didn’t want to be even more alone.

“If you think you are up to it” Hagrid said, Harry felt cool sweat appear on his forehead. If Hagrid asked if he was up to it, the monster had to be bad.

"I thought we should follow up on flying horses" Hagrid said "Olympe lent me some of her Abraxans"

"Oh" Harry said, he had no greater interest in getting too close to a flying horse the size of an elephant, especially as Madam Maxime had said that they require forceful handling. They walked away towards a paddock on the other side of the school grounds.

"Hagrid" Harry said sadly looking down on the ground, as they walked.

"What's the matter Harry" Hagrid said and stopped to watch him more carefully.

Harry looked down "You heard about Hedwig?"

Hagrid sighed heavily. Harry continued walking again and Hagrid did too.

"She was a nice Bird" Hagrid said "One of the nicest I ever met, a bit pompous sometimes perhaps, wouldn't eat from Fangs food"

"Yeah" Harry agreed smiling sadly he had loved the way Hedwig was pompous "She didn't approve of pig, thought he couldn't behave properly"

"Arhh" Hagrid sighed dreamily "She used to visit me, just like you lot"

"Do you have many visitors?" Harry asked curiously, he knew that Ginny visited him sometimes.

"Yeah got a couple, Ginny is nice girl usually visits me and Dumbledore visits me when he has a spare moment" Hagrid said "I reckon Tonks will visit me as usual now that she's back"

"You knew Tonks well?" Harry asked.

"Yeah, she had a hard time in her first years" Hagrid said "They used to tease her for being clumsy and then Fitch caught her running around at night, scared her half to death wouldn't walk around in the castle without Fang for a couple weeks"

“But she still loved Hogwarts” Harry said or rather asked.

“Yeah, she always loved the castle and she got loads of self confidence when she discovered that she could change her appearance” Hagrid said fondly.

“I thought she was born a Metamorphmagus?”

“Yeah, but she didn’t know how to control it until her third year” Hagrid explained “Every thing changed then she became much happier and dared to stand up to people. She became the most popular girl in school but never once forgot to visit me in my house. ‘Course she teased and said that it was only because I wouldn’t be to ruff on her if I found her in the forbidden forest again”

“She used to run around in the forest?” Harry asked as they approached the paddock. Three huge horses were inside.

“Yeah, loves animals Tonks, she was in there looking for unicorns as a Slytherin” Hagrid replied “But she didn’t fool me, knew her too well by then”

“I’m planning of bringing Buckbeak back” said Hagrid thoughtfully as he opened the paddock.

Hagrid greeted the horses fondly. A couple of minutes later, with loads of whiskey, had they managed to get the horses outside Hagrid’s hut. Hagrid seemed to like Abraxans even though they weren’t even poisonous or had fangs. Harry supposed they must make Hagrid feel normal in size for once. The sixth year NEWT class slowly gathered around Hagrid’s hut. Ron and Hermione who both usually remembered to turn up in good time for Hagrid’s lessons wasn’t there however when the class started.

Hagrid looked around and seemed to come to the same conclusion as Harry “Where’s Ron and Hermione”

Padma, Parvarti and Lavender burst out giggling “They are busy” Lavender managed to say through her giggles.

“Oh, well, every one else here?” Hagrid asked and seemed to count them “Right, well Welcome to my newt class”

Every one was quiet as they expected Hagrid to give them a speech as all their other teacher had done. He didn't.

“So, knew what these are?” Hagrid asked after a short moment and gestured to the horses.

It felt a bit empty without Hermione stretching her hand as far up as possible and giving anyone else that dared to raise their hand complete looks as if the one with the hand furthest up would get the question.

“Oh I know” Said Lavender eagerly stretching her arm up.

“Abraxans” Said the only Slytherin Pansy Parkinson without even raising her hand, Lavender glared at her.

“Err, yes that right” Hagrid said. They had a very enjoyable above average safe Care of Magical Creatures lesson. Ron and Hermione arrived halfway through the lesson just in time to fly around the castle. Both of Harry's best friends blushed deep crimson when the Lavender asked them innocently if there was any particular reason why they were late. Hagrid didn't ask where they had been or what they had done he just filled them in quickly that they were doing Abraxans today.

When the lesson was over Harry, Ron and especially Hermione was exhausted since Hermione had been the one that had been poisoned. Hagrid had as the rest of their teachers given them more homework than ever before, he had actually asked them for two rolls of parchment on flying horses and urged them to go and visit the Abraxans to study them.

Harry didn't mention the morning as he Ron and Hermione walked up towards the castle he trusted Hermione to talk to Ron about what had happened in potions. Instead, he caught on the subject Ron suggested: Quidditch tryouts.

Later that night Harry managed to slip out from the common room under his invisibility cloak. Harry doubted that Ron and Hermione would notice that he was missing. They had one of their arguments regarding the daily prophet and somehow they managed to mix it with house elves and Quidditch. Harry wondered where he was going to go to practise the imperius curse, the room of requirements was too well known by now. He couldn't risk any one walking in on him practising an unforgivable. His mind was blank he couldn't think of any place where he could practise except the chamber of secrets and he didn't ever want to enter that place again. He figured that if he would stand a chance in learning the imperius curse he would have to be in a very safe place or he wouldn't be able to relax enough. It was a great risk in trying to learn the imperius curse. If he were caught, he would probably be expelled. After a few moments of reasoning, he concluded that entering the chamber would be a necessary precaution. He walked fast towards Moaning Myrtle's bathroom. He hoped that Myrtle wouldn't notice him sneaking down. How would he get back up? He had not considered this but soon figured out that a broom would probably be the best solution. He quickly summoned a school broom and entered Myrtle's bathroom carefully, to his relief the bathroom was empty or at least Myrtle was not insight. He walked over to the sink and without too much problems hissed "Open" in parseltongue. He jumped up on the broom and flew down he hissed "Close" back at the entrance and it sealed itself. For a few moments, everything was dark before he lit his wand. Harry flew slowly down the huge pipe on the old school broom it shivered a lot and the cushioning charm had started to wear off so that it was very uncomfortable to sit on. Luckily, he soon reached the end of the pipe and landed on the damp floor of stone tunnel leading in to the chamber of secrets. He lit a magical fire on the floor so that he could use his wand freely.

"Accio Spider" He cried, his voice echoed in the dark tunnel. He shivered involuntarily, it really was a scary place and the fact that it had been home to a basilisk for about a thousand years didn't help, neither did his memories of this place. A huge spider by muggle measurements came flying helplessly towards him and fell to the floor. The spider seemed to sense danger because it started to run as fast as it could away from him.

This was the moment; he was going to cast an unforgivable curse. Harry felt bad it was not called unforgivable for nothing. He was going to control the spiders mind.

“IMPERIO!” Harry yelled and waved his wand in the preferable way at the spider. Harry knew at once that it had not worked because the spider sprinted on as if it had not noticed anything. He summoned the spider back next to him and tried again but nothing happened. He didn’t focus enough, he had to focus harder on being superior to the spider. He took a deep breath and tried again but it didn’t work. Harry spent what seemed to him several hours in the semi darkness before giving up for the night. He felt disappointed in himself he had not expected it to be this hard he had expected it to work more or less on the first try. He decided to practise more as soon as possible. He grabbed the school broom and flew up the pipe towards Myrtle’s bathroom he tried to listen carefully to make sure that no one was in the bathroom. When he couldn’t hear anything he made sure that his invisibility cloak covered him and hissed “Open”. The blinding white light from Myrtle’s bathroom blinded him as the sink slowly opened. His eyes slowly adjusted to the light and he saw to his horror that someone was standing in the room facing him he could not make out who it was the light was still too blinding. Harry blinked his eyes furiously to make them adjust to light quicker.

“Fleur” He exclaimed as he recognized who it was. Fleur was looking straight at him with the Marauder’s Map in her hands. Harry took a huge breath of relief. Fleur was the only person that Harry had considered telling about his decision to learn the imperius curse. He had not however since she was currently his teacher. She probably would not like to know that he planned to put an illegal curse on her colleague.

“Accio Cloak” Fleur said firmly and Harry’s invisibility cloak flew off him. Harry now noticed that Fleur was looking very sad, as if he might have been breeding Basilisks or something. He knew Fleur well enough to know that she had a tendency to expect the very worst, maybe it had something to do with losing her family.

“What were you doing down there Harry?” She asked hoarsely.

Harry didn't mind telling Fleur but not here, Myrtle might over hear them.

"Can I tell you somewhere else?" Harry asked timidly.

Fleur looked at him seriously before she handed him his cloak back
"Follow me to my office"

Soon they were standing in Fleur's and Tonks's bedroom.

"Tonks is off, running in the corridors" Fleur explained as they entered. Their bedroom was very nice and expensive looking. Two four-poster beds stood in each side of the room.

"What's she running around for" Harry asked.

"She says she is making up for lost time" Fleur explained smiling faintly.

There was a short silence and he knew that Fleur wanted him to explain himself.

"I was down there to practise the imperius curse" Harry said abruptly.

"Harry" Fleur said disapprovingly "Why?"

Harry told Fleur every thing that had happened that morning in his potion class and how they had told McGonagall about it and finally that he had decided to learn the imperius curse.

"So that was what I was doing down there" Harry said "I tried to control a spider but it just wouldn't work"

"Harry, you can't put the imperius curse on Snape"

"Why not?" Harry said irritably "I'm not going to let him stop Ron or me!"

"It doesn't work at him" Fleur explained "He can throw it off"

Harry didn't say anything, he had never even considered the possibility that Snape could be able to throw it off, but now that Fleur told him he

realised that he should have known. Snape was very good at Occlumency and was probably even better at defeating the imperious.

"I could talk to him too" Fleur offered.

"So he will know you favour me?" He replied angrily.

They stood silent for a moment, Fleur grabbed his hand and Harry could feel all his anxiety fade away.

"I would have been kicked out too if it was not for you" He said softly and sat down on her bed, Fleur placed herself gently in his lap.

"How's that?" She asked softly putting an arm around him.

"I thought of you when I was about to curse Snape"

"You're so sweet Wingbeat" Fleur said and kissed his cheek, Harry hugged her tightly.

"What are we going to do about Snape?" Harry asked softly "He's screwing up Ron's life just because he happens to be James Potter's son's best friend"

"We'll figure something out" Fleur said soothingly "If worst comes to the worst we'll shut him in the chamber of secrets"

Harry laughed "I always thought that a basilisk was a bad thing"

The door to the flung open and Tonks entered.

"Sorry" Tonks said as she saw them "I'll just take another walk"

"No, come in Tonks" Fleur said "It's okay"

"Yeah" Harry agreed even though it had been nice to be alone with Fleur he knew he had to get to bed soon.

"Right" Tonks said and walked over to her bed.

"So how's Hogwarts?" Harry asked to have something to talk about.

“That secret passage behind the mirror has collapsed” Tonks said sadly “How am I now supposed to sneak out of the castle?”

“Take a look at this” Harry said and handed Tonks his map.

“WOW” Tonks yelled as she saw what it was “I can see Filch on this!”

“There are seven passages out of school?” Tonks said when she had visible counted the lines leading off the map. Tonks couldn’t help moving her lips when she was reading and the same was apparently true when she was counting.

“Yes” Harry said “But Fitch knows about these four”

Harry told Tonks all about the Marauder’s Map and how it work. He walked back towards his dorm a little later under his indivisibility cloak. He entered the common room and walked swiftly up the stairs to his dormitory.

The Quidditch tryouts was a disaster, nobody in Gryffindor seemed to ever have gone near a broom and much less actually considered flying on it. Except Ginny who was a good flyer and fairly good with the Quaffle too. Half way through the tryouts Ron lost his temper and flew right into Gryffindor tower and yelled furiously at every one to get down to the Quidditch pitch at once. Harry wondered if the Quidditch captain post was cursed because Ron showed every piece of frantic energy that Oliver Wood and Angelina Johnson had showed. Or perhaps this was just Ron’s way of dealing with the pressure and expectations.

No matter how hard they tried, they could not find a third chaser. Those few who managed to throw the Quaffle while flying had no interest in Quidditch what so ever and were there only because Ron had forced them. Ron even tried to force Hermione up on a broom but quickly gave up, when Hermione threatened to debone his legs.

“Stupid” Ron cursed badly “Quidditch”

“We better ask your mum for more Weasley’s” Dean Thomas said to Ron as they were walking back towards the castle for dinner.

“Nah, why bother let’s just ask Hermione” Seamus Finnigan teased. Ron turned red it was now common knowledge in the school that Harry Potter’s friends were a couple.

“Shut up” Ron said angrily.

“Oh come on it’s for the team” Dean urged him teasingly.

“Shut up” Ginny snapped furiously. They all spun around none of them had noticed that Ginny was walking behind them with a friend of hers “Don’t make me force you two to clean the bed pans”

“Sorry” Seamus muttered “I didn’t see you”

“That’s your excuse?” Ginny hissed dangerously.

“We were just joking” Dean said apologetically.

“Hope you keep your humour when you are cleaning” She spat furiously.

“Ginny” Ron said softly “they were just joking”

“That’s just your problem Ron, you are too bloody soft!” Ginny snapped at him “What do you think Hermione would say?”

“What?” Ron replied, too shocked to come up with a better answer.

“Fine! Go make babies with Hermione” Ginny yelled and ran off towards the castle.

Ron blushed so badly that his hair looked blonde.

“What’s up with her?” Ron said as he watched her run away.

“No idea” Harry replied “Think she really is Ginny?”

“Yes” Ron said “Didn’t you see the way she glared at me? Mum must have taught her that”

Dean and Seamus didn’t say anything they were too shocked to speak. Ginny had never ever yelled like this, much less in public.

Dean and Seamus spent that evening cleaning the entrance hall with Fitch. Hermione told Harry and Ron during dinner that it was Ginny's fourth and fifth detention.

"I've never even taken house points" Ron exclaimed.

"I know" Hermione said "But it's not as if Ginny has made any faults she's just very strict"

"She loves it" Ron stated.

"That's you and your brother's fault" Hermione said coolly.

"How's that" Ron said irritably.

"You always treated her like a little baby. And now that she got some power she enjoys it" Hermione explained.

"Treated her like a baby?" Ron said incredulously "You have no idea how we used to fight"

"Did you fight?" Hermione asked curiously "Over what?"

"All sorts of stuff" Ron said dismissively "Why don't you ask Ginny"

Hermione looked down on her plate and muttered "I don't think she will, she kind of told me that if I was not a prefect she would put me in detention"

"What" Ron and Harry exclaimed.

"She said she was tired of my... nagging and every thing" Hermione said sadly.

"Of you're nagging?" Ron asked "She wanted to give you a detention for caring?"

"Not only" Hermione said still looking down "I was stupid"

"Not possible!"

“Don’t be stupid Ron. It’s my fault we only got one house elf cleaning Gryffindor tower”

Harry had no idea that Hermione knew about the house elves apparently Ron knew too because he didn’t seem the least surprised.

“It’s not your fault” Ron said firmly “They just doesn’t know better”

Hermione looked up at Ron and looked at him as if she wanted to cry madly in to his shoulder but managed to contain herself.

“I have to go down and apologize to them” Hermione said looking down on her plate again. “Maybe they just need some human contact so that they can see that we are not all what they seems to think we are”

“I’ll go with you” Said Ron dreamily obviously thinking of all the sweets he could eat.

Hermione snorted “You are so hopeless Ron”

Harry was happily surprised later that evening when Ron and Hermione asked him to follow them down to the kitchens. Harry had thought that Ron and Hermione wanted to be alone like some sort of date.

“Harry Potter sir” Dobby squealed as they entered the kitchen and ran over to him. Dobby was still wearing most of Hermione’s hats and socks.

“Hello Dobby” Harry replied.

“Harry Potter has his noble and brave friends with him” Dobby said as he looked over to Ron and Hermione.

“Hello Dobby” Ron said.

“Oh mister Wheezy wizard sir” Dobby said sadly as he bowed deeply “Dobby heard, Dobby heard what happened in the dungeons”

“Oh” Ron replied.

“But you must not worry sir Wheezy” Dobby said “Miss Granger and Harry Potter sir will help”

“Yeah” Hermione said at once brightening up considerably “You don’t have to take potions to write your NEWT”

“But if I don’t take potions I will not even get a D” Ron said.

“I’ll teach you” Hermione said “And when you write your potion NEWT you will just as good as the rest of us”

This was a much better plan then to put Snape under the imperius curse Harry thought and more obvious too.

“But what about your studies?” Ron asked.

“I’ll manage” Hermione said.

“I’ll help too you can do my potions homework” Harry joked.

“As if I would let you” Hermione said in a stern happy way.

“And I who figured we would have to put Snape under the Imperius” Harry said hoping they would take it as a joke “And Fleur suggested that we shut him up in the Chamber”

“You discussed me?” Ron asked.

“Yes of course we did” Harry said.

There was uncomfortable silence that was broken by a group of elves that offered them all kinds of sweets and food.

“Listen to me every one for a moment” Hermione said loudly. All the tiny house elves in the kitchen turned and looked at her. Hermione took a deep breath and swallowed.

“I am sorry I placed clothes in Gryffindor tower” Hermione said, every elf stood absolutely still. Hermione stood still too as if hoping that someone would say that they forgave her but nobody did.

“And I promise not to leave clothes laying around anymore” Hermione finally said and when no one replied she added “Please come and clean as usual so that Dobby doesn’t have to do it all by himself”

“We will Miss” Said an old house elf who seemed to be in some sort of command “We are sorry we neglected our duties”

“No don’t be sorry it was my fault” Hermione said.

“If you say so Miss” The old elf replied and bowed.

Hermione sighed “I was thinking that, maybe I could help you in here to make up for my mistake”

“Oh no Miss. Miss does not have to worry...”

“But I want to” Hermione said firmly.

“Miss Granger can help Dobby if she wants to” Dobby said uncertainly, many of the elves gave Dobby disapproving glances.

“Yes I would like that Dobby” Said Hermione still very firmly and some of the house elves looked at her again instead of Dobby.

“Thank you for visiting us Miss” The old elf said and started to beckon them towards the door.

Before they knew what had happened they were standing outside the painting picturing the ball of fruit, arms full of pumpkin pasties, tart and several bottles of Butterbeer.

“You are going to clean with them?” Ron asked.

“Yes. But don’t worry I’m not going to force you to do something nice” Hermione replied.

“I do nice things” Ron said indignantly.

Ron and Hermione had soon worked up a full-fledged argument, they argued all the way up to Gryffindor tower but as they entered the portrait, they miraculously managed to call it off. The following day they spent making homework. Harry and Ron had loads of fun for

once Hermione had more homework to do then they had, however Hermione finished her History of Magic and Arithmancy assay before Harry and Ron was finished with their potion assay. When they were finally done, Hermione kindly reminded Harry that he had four rolls of parchment more to do on why he was not poisoned. Harry had planned to refuse writing the assay but then he thought that that was exactly what Snape hoped for, it would be an excuse for a detention and fifty points from Gryffindor. Fleur wasn't terribly good at potions but she was glad to help him when he told her, it turned out to be one of the least boring assays he had ever written.

Harry, Fleur and Tonks agreed that they would start the dueling club the following Saturday afternoon. Both the defence against the dark arts Professors had received complains that they did not plan to teach practical defence neither of them had told anyone that they planned a dueling club, the only one who knew that there was going to be a dueling club was Harry's DA. So when Fleur announced Wednesday dinner that there was going to be a dueling club it was a complete surprise to most of the great hall. Most of the students seemed very happy about it even the Slytherins or that was until Fleur announced that Mr Potter was going to teach too.

Snape was as horrible as ever in potions on Thursday morning, but as Harry had managed to keep his temper and he had made all his homework all Snape could do was to take twenty points off Harry for his cheek. Harry wondered whether McGonagall had spoken with Snape at all, the only big difference was that that Snape didn't give Harry any more homework then anyone else and did not accidentally drop the sample of Harry potion at the end of the class.

Just for the record, Harry's headache when he was poisoned was from pure nerves.

Please Review if you read this!

Oh and thanks for all the useful pointers, Seaver.

Chapter 17 The Dueling Club

Harry spent Saturday morning going through what they would teach in the afternoon one final time with Fleur and Tonks. They had no age restriction so it was likely that they would have first years that had never done more magic than levitating a feather. However, it would not really matter since first years would only duel with other first years. Tonks had told them that she would love to teach the first years the tickling charm, 'Rictusempra'. Tonks seemed to love first years as much as Arthur Weasley loved muggles. When lunch ended most of the DA stayed back to help rearrange the great hall. They had decided on having three dueling rings, one monitored by each of them. Soon the house tables were gone and three huge dueling rings stood there in their place. Each dueling ring resembled a boxing ring though they were round and much larger as dueling was not a contact sport. Some members of the DA began dueling while waiting on the rest of the students.

"Hey! Harry" Tonks called "dare to duel?"

"I don't duel with girls, Professor" Harry replied teasingly.

Every girl in the hall glared at him.

"Get here Potter" Tonks said in mock anger.

"Right, Professor" Harry said and walked over to the dueling ring closest to the staff table. Tonks entered the ring and walked over to the far side of it, Harry entered it too.

"As you all can see we have our wands drawn" Tonks explained to the audience that had gathered at the ring side.

"And now we bow and at the count of three we duel" Tonks said "Fleur will you?"

"One... Two... Three" Fleur said loudly. At three Tonks pointed her wand at him, Harry was a little awkward dueling with Tonks. Last time he had duelled Bellatrix Lestrange and Voldemort had tried to kill him not to mention that he had actually wanted to kill Bellatrix Lestrange.

“Impedimenta” Tonks cried.

Harry snapped out of his thoughts and managed to side step Tonks spell at last moment.

“Reaktus” Harry said and waved his wand at himself. Reaktus was one of the agility charms Dueling for Masters had described. He had never used Reaktus before and didn't think that it had worked properly every motion he made seemed much slower instead of faster but then he realised when he pointed his wand at Tonks again that he made swishing noises in the air and probably moved about twice as fast as usual.

“R e a k t u s” Tonks said very slowly or at least that is what Harry heard. The shock of being in this almost dreamlike state had given Tonks the opportunity to cast the same agility charm.

“Expelliarmus” Harry cried and sparks flew slowly out of his wand towards Tonks, who without much trouble stepped out of the way.

“Rictusempra” Tonks said now at, to Harry, normal speed. The sparks still flew slowly through the air and Harry decided to block them rather than dodge them.

“Protego” Harry replied and successfully blocked the Tickling Charm.

They walked around the circle facing each other casting every major friendly dueling spell. Tonks was a very good dueler you could tell that she was a fully qualified auror. Harry would not stand a chance if she had decided to use more nasty curses. Tonks managed to hit him with the jelly leg jinx and Harry her with a blinding hex when their agility charms started to wear off. They both managed to reverse the spells at once.

“Stupify” Harry yelled the red sparks flew out of his wand as fast as ever.

“Protego” Tonks cried blocking it.

“Accio Wand” Harry said trying to summon Tonks wand from her.

“Protego” Tonks said again and managed to hold on to her wand.

“Expelliarmus” Tonks yelled at the same time as Harry yelled “Locomotor Mortis” Both hit. Harry’s wand flew over to Tonks who did not manage to catch it since she had fallen over when Harry’s leg locker curse hit her.

Harry was defeated. His wand laid a short bit behind Tonks. Tonks easily unlocked her legs and sat up.

“Give in Harry?” Tonks panted.

“What if I don’t” Harry panted back he had not realised how physically exhausting the duel had been. He knew that the Reaktus curse was draining physically but he had not expected it to be so bad.

“I’ll tickle you to death” Tonks said from the floor “Rictusempra”

Harry did not have energy to jump out of the way and instead stood his ground and took the spell squarely in his chest. He fell to the floor laughing feebly he was at the moment too exhausted to laugh as much as he felt like.

“Give in?” Tonks asked and lifted the tickling charm.

“Yes” Harry gasped “I do”

“That’s better” Tonks said she helped him off the floor with a wave of her wand and banished his wand to him.

Harry looked over to his DA and saw to his surprise that it was not just the DA standing at the ringside. Half the school seemed to stand there, he glanced over at them more carefully most Gryffindors, half the Hufflepuff and half the Ravenclaws seemed to be there waiting for something. It was a moment before the thought that they were there for the dueling club stroke him.

“Welcome all” Fleur announced from the staff platform “Please give a hand to the first duelers Professor Tonks and Mr Potter”

Everyone applauded and cheered, Harry saw Tonks bow to him and he did the same. He had never finished a duel before and had no idea that you were supposed to bow afterwards as well.

“Please step forward and signup here” Fleur said and gestured to a long parchment “If you are a first year or feel that you have no idea how to duel Tonks will help you with the basics she will be teaching Rictusempra in the third ring”

Fleur pointed at the ring farthest away from the staff table and closest to the doors.

“For every one else Mr Potter will be observing dueling at the second ring” Fleur said and pointed to the ring in the middle.

“Any questions?” Fleur asked.

“Will this affect our grades” Ernie Macmillan asked eagerly.

“What you do here will not affect the grades we give you” Fleur said and Ernie looked slightly disappointed “But for those of you who are taking your OWLs or NEWTs I highly recommend paying close attention to what we teach here”

“Any thing else?”

“Are you really Harry Potter’s girlfriend” A little Hufflepuff first year squeaked, Tonks smiled fondly at her. There was a an awkward silence as Fleur didn’t respond at once everyone seemed very interested in the answer and kept unusual quiet.

“I don’t usually discuss my private life” Fleur said firmly as if she just had decided that the entire situation was ridiculous “but yes Harry Potter is my boyfriend”

Everyone already knew that Fleur was Harry’s girlfriend but now it was as official as it ever could be. The silence that had filled the hall broke, every girl seemed to giggle and every boy seemed to grin knowingly at Harry. He blushed and looked down on the floor he was very grateful however that Draco Malfoy wasn’t there to witness this.

“Any thing else, except my private life” Fleur asked sharply and then added almost at once “Good, get going”

The students slowly managed to form a long line up to Fleur who helped them put their name down correctly. When a student had signed up, they walked over to Tonks or Harry. The first one to walk over to Harry was Ginny Weasley. She didn't say anything but looked dangerously at him as if daring him to start a conversation. Harry could once more see Ginny naked in front of him it had been a while since last time his brain had showed him that image but he turned red none the less.

“Pathetic” Ginny muttered loud enough for him to hear and gave him a very cold patronizing look. Harry didn't know what to think or what to feel. He had never expected Ginny to say something like that and much less look at him in that way.

“So... Harry” Ginny said in a very cool challenging voice “Are you going to duel with us”

“N-No” Stammered Harry “I thought I would just stand back and give pointers”

“Oh” Ginny snarled.

“You all right Ginny?” Harry asked carefully, something had to be terrible wrong for Ginny to behave like this.

“Why would it be any of your business” Ginny snapped.

“Because I'm your friend” said Harry feebly.

“Hermione's right you do have a thing for saving people don't you?”

Harry gaped at her, he had saved her life and now she had a problem with him caring for her. He tried to say something, anything to her but the no words would not form in his throat instead he closed his mouth and tried again but nothing. Ginny raised an eyebrow in a bored way and gave him another very cold patronizing look that caused Harry to look down on the floor again.

“Lost something?” Neville asked he was done too with the sign up “I always lose thing, need help to look?”

“Er, no Neville it’s nothing important” Harry said he didn’t have the heart to tell Neville that he had not lost something, if Neville thought that for once he was the one who had not lost something Harry wasn’t going to spoil it for him “Probably left it in my trunk”

Ginny’s face contorted in an unreadable expression for a moment Harry thought that Ginny was going to tell Neville that Harry had not lost anything but Ginny didn’t say anything.

“Why don’t you two go first then?” Harry asked changing the subject “If you don’t mind?”

“No” Said Neville happily and looked over at Ginny.

“Sure” Ginny said and tried to smile even though her face still was contorted in that unreadable way. Neville and Ginny climbed in side the ring and faced each other.

“Ready?” Harry asked they both nodded in reply and bowed to each other their wands drawn.

“One... two... three!” Harry said firmly. Both Neville and Ginny hesitated for a moment before they started to whirl curses at each other. The rings was sealed by magic so every curse that went flying off in the wrong direction died out at the ringside this was fortunate as Ginny suddenly aimed as bad as Neville. Harry thought for a moment that Ginny was being nice but then he saw that her expression was a mix between fury and disappointment. After a short while, Neville hit Ginny with the impedimenta curse and won. Ginny was furious at her for losing to Neville but still managed to bow politely to him and walk off the ring. Ginny placed herself at the far side of the ring and didn’t speak to anyone.

Many more students had arrived from Fleur now and Harry teamed up Justin Finch-Fletchley and Dean Thomas. Harry was very proud when he saw them duel the cast all kinds of hexes and curses at each other and managed to block most of them. If they were hit, they quickly did the counter jinx and continued to duel. The duel went on

for several minutes but finally Justin managed to hit Dean's right foot with a stunner and Dean fell to the floor immobile.

"Eneravate" Harry said after a short moment and Dean came back to life. Dean got to his feet slowly and bowed to Justin.

"Nice one" Dean said to show that he had no hard feelings.

"You too" Justin replied and smiled.

"Excelent both of you" Harry said proudly.

"You might want to keep moving a bit more when you casting spells, Dean" Harry said carefully he didn't want Dean to think that he was being lectured then added jokingly to Justin "And you might want to aim higher"

Next, he paired Ron and Hermione on request by Hermione since she and Ron was having an argument about muggle stitches and whether or whether not brooms was invented for the purpose of Quidditch. It seemed to be a specially of theirs to argue about several completely unrelated things at once. However when they stood opposite each other in the ring they didn't seem to be the slightest mad at each other. Both of them seemed to wonder how much they would hurt the other by winning.

"One... Two... Three" Harry counted firmly.

"Reaktus" Hermione said almost apologetically and waved her wand at herself. To Harry's surprise Ron did the same and soon they were engaged in a fierce battle. Hermione cast many curses and hexes that Harry had never heard of. Ron on the other hand seemed to be able to use some of his Quidditch experience and managed to dodge Hermione's spells in the most spectacular ways. Hermione seemed greatly annoyed by this and started to cast her curses even more violent but Ron kept dodging them and even managed to hit Hermione with an ear-twitching jinx. Hermione seemed very angry by this at first but then grinned and performed the counter jinx her ears stopped twitching at once.

“Riddikulus” Hermione cried Ron stopped moving for a moment clearly confused and got hit strait between his eyes by the Riddikulus charm. Ron’s robes turned into his old frayed dress robe that he had worn during the Yule ball almost two years ago.

“Finite Riddikulus” Ron hissed and waved his wand at his dress robe which turned back to his normal black school robes. Ron glared at Hermione who seemed to realise that she had gone too far and looked truly sorry. They continued their duel, Ron started to use more serious curses then ear twitching jinxes. Hermione however had no problem blocking Ron’s curses.

The duel had now changed character completely it was now Ron who was getting annoyed by Hermione’s ability to block everything.

“Petrificus Totalus” Hermione cried after a long moment of just blocking Ron’s curses, the body bind curse took Ron with surprise and hit him in his chest. Ron fought it helplessly for a fraction of a second before he fell face down on the floor stiff as a board.

“Ron” Hermione squeaked she apparently was afraid that she had hurt him she quickly ran over to him and turned him over to his back. The floor of the ring had a light cushioning charm on it so you wouldn’t hurt yourself too much even if you fell face down on it.

“Finite” Hermione said “Oh I’m so sorry Ron”

Harry could tell that Ron wanted to be angry with Hermione for humiliating him like this, not only had he been beaten by his girlfriend in front of half the school but Hermione had to run over to him and apologize for doing it, Ron could not be angry with Hermione for caring about him however. Instead, he glared at the peoples at the ringside who was watching them with great interest perhaps even expecting them to kiss.

“Very good” Said Harry loudly hoping to take some attention from Ron and Hermione, it worked all to well half the school turned to him expectantly. Harry knew he aught to give some kind of pointers to them or compliment them or something but he couldn’t think of anything. Fortunately, Fleur came to his rescue.

“Listen up every one” Fleur said every one looked up at her instead of Harry, especially the boys. She was apparently done with signing every one up.

“We are three hundred seventy two members of the dueling club” Fleur said proudly, they had not been expecting this many to join “Which makes it very hard for us to teach properly, we will have to divide you into two groups”

“First to fourth years will be the first group who here after will be taught Friday afternoon’s instead of Saturday afternoon’s when the fifth sixth and seven years will be here” Fleur explained “Today I’ll teach fifth years and up here in ring number one” Fleur said and gestured at the ring closest to the staff table. “Ha... Mr Potter will teach the third and fourth years and Professor Tonks the rest”

Tonks was of course the one best-qualified dueler and should teach the oldest students but she had absolutely refused, she wanted to teach the youngest. Fleur had tried to persuade her as she didn’t feel too confident as a dueler but to no use. The third and fourth years gathered around Harry’s ring. Harry felt very awkward teaching so many peoples at once, he had felt very awkward teaching the DA in the beginning too but they had only been twenty five and he knew most of them now there was about a hundred peoples which he didn’t know looking expectantly at him. He glanced over them once more and saw Denis Creevy’s eager face beaming at him Denis had been the youngest DA member.

“Today” Harry said with much more confidence then he felt “We will begin with the most fundamental dueling, we will be practising Expelliarmus the disarming spell” he had figured out on forehand what to say and expected groans of boredom when he announced that they were going to practise a so basic spell but nobody protested the slightest.

“We are unfortunately too many to practise this all at once, so why don’t the girls go first” Harry said jerkily and gestured towards the ring. The girls entered the ring and looked nervously around.

“Has anyone used Expelliarmus before?” Harry asked he wanted someone to demonstrate the spell.

“No one?” Harry asked uncertainly he had expected that about half of them would have at least tried it sometime but maybe it wasn’t that odd after all Umbridge had of course not taught them anything remotely like a spell much less a combat spell.

“Denis?” Harry asked “Would like to demonstrate?”

“Yes Professor Potter” Denis said eagerly and started to climb the ringside and fell over onto the ring. Harry didn’t know how to react towards the ‘professor’ he didn’t want to be called professor but decided to just let the matter slip since most students probably would call him Harry or at least Potter.

“As you can see the ring floor has a light Cushioning Charm so you won’t hurt yourself” Harry said when Denis almost bounced off the floor and up to his feet.

“Okay, Denis got your wand?” Harry asked and pulled out his.

“Yes Professor Potter” Denis said and pulled out his wand so quickly that he almost dropped it.

“You don’t have to call me Professor” Harry said “Harry will do fine”

Denis smiled widely at him as if it was a proof that Harry knew him well enough to be on first name terms.

“Right Denis disarm me” Harry said and prepared himself for being thrown backwards.

“All right... Harry” Denis said proudly “EXPELLIARMUS”

Denis had a fairly good aim and hit him in the stomach, his wand flew out of his hand and he landed softly on the floor.

“Excellent Denis, good aim” Harry said when he stood up again Denis handed him his wand “Any questions?”

“Does it hurt?” Asked a blonde girl who was wearing the Ravenclaw crest, Harry thought she was a third year but wasn’t sure.

“No, it doesn’t Miss...” Harry said and kicked himself mentally, he sounded just as a professor.

“Dobbs, Professor... Emma Dobbs” The blond girl replied and blushed slightly.

Harry didn’t know what to reply, if he called her Emma then she might be offended since she thought of him as Professor. Perhaps he would let them call him professor in the Dueling Club and force them to call him Potter or Harry between classes.

Harry swallowed “Anything else Miss Dobbs?” he said trying to look confident and smiled.

“No” Emma said “Well... will we get any homework?”

“No, no homework” Harry said and there was a breath of relief from the students “And we won’t force you to be here every lesson if you don’t want to. This is supposed to be all fun”

“Professor Potter” A boy from the ringside asked.

“Yes” Harry replied and added painfully “Mr...?”

“Moss, sir” The boy said. “Will you teach us all the time or will Professor Delacour teach us as well?”

“Professor Tonks and Delacour will teach you as well” Harry replied shortly not too pleased about the question.

“Any thing else?” Harry asked “Good let’s get starting then”

They all practised expelliarmus, first the girls for half an hour then the boys they kept shifting all afternoon until dinnertime. It all went very well every one seemed able to cast the disarming spell in the end. There was only a minor incident when two girls were hit by the spell at the same time and flew backwards into each other, but fortunately, they didn’t hurt themselves too badly. Harry had walked around among the students giving pointers, some aimed to low, others waved their wand the wrong way and some did not pronounce

Expelliarmus correctly. A quarter to six, they dismissed their students and started to return the great hall to its original state.

"They all call me professor" Harry complained to Tonks and Fleur when they magiced the long tables back.

"I know, me too" Said Tonks sadly.

"You are a professor" Fleur reminded Tonks.

"I know, but they don't have to go around telling me all the time do they" Tonks replied crossly and added after a moment "But I suppose it's better then Nymphadora"

"We didn't get a single Slytherin" Fleur stated.

"I know" Harry replied happily.

"No" Fleur said "I'm serious, it can't be a real dueling club if one of the school houses is missing"

"Come off it. We don't want to teach them to duel"

"Why not?" Asked Fleur "If you hadn't known any thing about the school houses when you was sorted you would have been a Slytherin"

"It wanted to place you in Slytherin?" Tonks asked incredulously and fell over a chair that she had just Magiced back giggling madly.

"Yeah, but it's only because I'm can talk to snakes"

"No it's not" Said Tonks teasingly "You are a bit evil sometimes"

"Like when" Harry retorted.

"When you were in court" Fleur replied.

"I wasn't evil they disserved it" Harry exclaimed.

"Yeah, but you enjoyed it"

“You would too”

“Yes, maybe I should have been a Slytherin” Fleur said, they had unconsciously stepped close to each other and were now only a couple of feet away from each other “After all I’m pure blood and a veela with horrible temper”

“No you wouldn’t” Harry said “You would be a Gryffindor, or Ravenclaw or a Hufflepuff like Tonks”

“Not if I asked it to be Slytherin” Fleur smirked “If you got to be a Gryffindor why shouldn’t it let me be a Slytherin”

“Because” Harry said and was about to say something nasty, but then he thought of Selena Malfoy and that he would still love Fleur just as much even if she were a Slytherin.

“Because?” Fleur echoed questionably.

“Never mind” Harry replied “It doesn’t matter what house you would have been in, I would still...” Tonks was watching him expectantly with a huge smile across her face she turned away when she saw that Harry was looking at her.

“... love you even if you were a Slytherin” Harry whispered to Fleur so that Tonks wouldn’t hear.

“I know you would Harry” Fleur said whispered teasingly “I’m a veela after all”

Harry chuckled and Fleur grinned.

“We really should have at least one Slytherin though” Fleur said.

“Fine” Harry said “But I won’t beg them”

“Do you want me to beg them instead?” Fleur asked innocently and made a very pleading face “Oh... Please Draco, Please come to the dueling club, I would do anything for you”

“Stop it” Harry said crossly.

“Jealous?” Fleur asked teasingly.

“No just disgusted” Harry said truthfully “Are you black mailing me?”

“What if I am” Fleur said, Harry knew that Fleur only was teasing him.

“Because, I could shut you in the chamber then we would have a horrible veela petrifying boys by kissing them”

“No boy have ever been petrified by me” Fleur stated.

“Bet you could lure them down in the chamber then” Harry said suggestively. “I bet you could even make them write bloody messages on the walls”

“Shut up” Fleur said “I’m only interested in you” She said softly and blasted him with her veela powers. Fleur’s hair started to blow her lips seemed to swell as well as her chest, her deep blue eyes seemed to penetrate his soul and became almost mesmerising

“Now” Fleur purred softly “Why don’t you go write a goodbye in your blood on the wall and meet me in the toilet on second floor and I’ll show you something... important”

Harry smiled teasingly at her “You are cute” He didn’t know why her veela charm effected him so poorly but he supposed he knew her too well.

“You are not supposed to say that” Fleur said and lost most of her veela charm “You are supposed to say oh Yes love of my life I will do anything for you”

“And peoples say I can’t behave properly” Tonks said shaking her head disapprovingly. Harry and Fleur turned red they had completely forgotten that Tonks was listening.

“Blushing are we?” Tonks asked.

“Shut up” Harry and Fleur chorused.

“Fine then you don’t want to know that you have an audience” Tonks said and gestured over at some second years that had just entered the great hall. Harry and Fleur blushed in an even deeper shade of red. Fleur glanced over at the second years and seemed to decide that she had nothing to hide from them. Before Harry could react Fleur pressed her body close to his, kissed him on his mouth. They second years goggled at them and some girls giggled.

“Right” Harry said and licked his lips slightly Fleur had given him a very wet kiss. Not that he minded. Out of instinct, he put an arm around her.

“I rather have facts then rumours” Fleur explained “Besides they already call you professor and there is nothing wrong with two professors loving each other”

Harry smiled “You know what I think? I think you would have been in Slytherin”

“No I wouldn’t I would have been in Gryffindor or maybe Ravenclaw”

“How do you know?” Harry asked.

“I tried the hat on” Fleur said “I asked Dumbledore after a staff meeting”

“So it said Gryffindor or Ravenclaw?” Asked Harry, the sorting hat usually settled for one house.

“Yes, but since it didn’t have to put me in a house it simply said that I would have done best in Gryffindor or Ravenclaw” Fleur explained “It was kind of weird...”

“So, dinning at the staff table tonight?” Fleur asked jokingly “You worked for four hours as a teacher today after all”

“Yes of course I will, I can sit next to Snape and maybe we can have a nice little chat about potions” Harry said sarcastically.

“Professor Snape Potter or I will have to take points”

“Oh yeah, Fleur” Harry said pronouncing Fleur very clearly.

“Harry seriously, we really need a couple of Slytherins it’s not good for the school to be divided like this”

“I’m not stopping them” Harry said “but I really think we will do better without them especially the sixth years”

“You wouldn’t be mad at me if talked to Snape about it?” She asked.

“Yes I would” Harry said angrily “I told you how I feel about Snape, besides he won’t help”

“Please Harry” Fleur begged “It’s not like I would plead with him or anything I would just ask him as one Professor to another”

“He won’t treat you as a professor” Harry said irritably “To him you are James Potter’s son’s girlfriend that loves and favours me because I’m the boy who lived”

“Even so he has to treat me right or he’ll have to answer to Dumbledore” Fleur pointed out “And he respect Dumbledore”

“Right, ask him then but I warned you”

The hall had now filled with students who sat down at their tables talking happily or reading a book some even did some homework while they were waiting for the dinner to begin. When the hall was full of hungry students and the food was about to appear Harry said goodbye to Fleur and walked over to his usual seat. He was painfully aware that most of the students were talking about him and Fleur.

Before you judge Ginny or me, please note that her behaviour is a part of the story!

I just wondered does anyone read this at all? Well I know some do but I didn’t have a single review on last chapter so please **Review!**

Next chapter **Cactaceae Capillus.**

Thanks again Sevear for your pointers.

Chapter 18 Cactaceae Capillus

Ron and Hermione was already seated they were both congratulating Neville for doing great in a duel.

“Harry” Hermione said happily “I’ve talked to some third and fourth years and they all say you were great”

“Yeah... Professor” Ron said teasingly.

Harry blushed “I can’t help that, they just started calling me it and...”

“It’s okay Harry, they really should call you professor since you were teaching them” Hermione interrupted smiling proudly.

“Yeah professor” Ron teased again.

“Oh shut up Ron” Hermione snapped.

“I would” Ron said still teasingly “If you were a professor like Harry”

Hermione ignored Ron “So you taught expelliarmus?”

“Yes” Harry said and when Hermione looked expectantly at him, he told her all about every thing that had happened since hers and Ron’s duel.

“And afterwards Fleur tells me that she is going to speak to Snape about there being no Slytherins”

“Is she mad or is this some veela thing” Ron exclaimed.

“Ron” Hermione said disapprovingly “She is absolutely right, it’s not good that there’s no Slytherins”

“Are you mad too?” Ron asked “Being no Slytherins is the best thing about it”

“It wouldn’t hurt to have at least some Slytherins” Hermione said. Ron and Harry exchanged their usual glances when Hermione said something completely unbelievable.

"Fine be that way but I am going to encourage Fleur to get some Slytherins to join anyway" Hermione said firmly and Harry knew there was no point to argue.

"Right" Harry replied and decided to change the subject "I'm worried about Ginny, she said that you were right" Harry nodded at Hermione "Said I had a thing for saving people"

"What?" Ron asked utterly bewildered "You saved HER life in the chamber"

"Are you sure you heard her right" Hermione asked raising both of her eyebrows.

"Positive" Harry replied "She acted just as Draco Malfoy, seemed to really, really hate me"

"Do you thing she is being controlled?" Hermione asked in a whisper.

"Nah, not a chance" Ron said firmly "I've known her all her life, I could tell"

"How can you be so sure?" Harry asked.

"Just look at her" Ron said and looked down the table where Ginny sat alone. It hurt Harry to see Ginny alone like that but if she was as nasty to every one else, as she was to him, it wasn't really strange that she was alone. Harry watched Ginny carefully as she ate Ginny wore a sad expression but otherwise looked and moved as much as Ginny ever had.

"She looks very lonely though" Hermione said.

"Yeah" Ron agreed heavily "I thought she hung out with that Selena"

"Me too" Hermione agreed and looked over at Selena Malfoy who was also eating alone. They watched Selena for a moment and saw that she like Ginny was very sad. Harry sighed, why did every one have to be so sad all the time?

“So why do you suppose Ginny isn’t happy?” Harry asked his friends.

“No idea” Ron said hopelessly “I can’t figure it out, she is on the Quidditch team and everything”

“Being on the Quidditch team is not that important” Hermione stated.

“Well, she’s a prefect too and she is not ugly” Ron said “She should be happy”

“Do you think it’s my fault?” Harry asked uncertainly, maybe Ginny had gotten upset again about him and Fleur.

“She seemed alright a few days ago” Ron said and then added teasingly “Besides you’re not that good looking”

Harry pretended to be upset though he knew Ron was right he wasn’t really great looking but he liked the way he looked anyway especially his green eyes. Harry knew that most boys in his year probably didn’t like to look like their parents but Harry loved it.

“No, I told you before at Grimmauld place, I don’t think it has anything to do with boys at all” Hermione whispered.

“What then?” Ron whispered back and for some reason Hermione blushed. Harry thought it had to do something to do with what Ron said at first but he was wrong.

“The nightmares about the chamber you know?” asked Hermione Ron nodded “they got worse this summer when she... well... she is a girl”

“When we fell for each other?” Harry asked looking up at the staff table at Fleur.

“No... when she... well” Hermione said awkwardly but then seemed to decide that the situation was stupid and blurted the rest out “She had her first period”

“She has those?” Ron asked incredulously.

"Of course she has she is a girl" Hermione hissed.

"And that made her nightmares worse?"

"Yes" Hermione said forcefully.

"But what does that have to do with her temper? Ginny has never been rude before even if she is tired" Ron asked and Harry agreed. Ginny fell asleep if she was tired nothing else.

"I don't know" Hermione sighed "something"

"Harry" Tonks's voice said from behind him.

"Yeah" Harry replied as he turned around to face her.

"We were wondering if you three wanted to join us to celebrate the dueling club" Tonks asked "I got all kinds of unhealthy things from the kitchens"

"Sure, right now?" Asked Harry and looked over at Ron and Hermione who didn't at all seem happy to be invited.

"Sorry, but we made other plans" Hermione said "Why don't you go Harry"

Harry was about to ask them what other plans but then figured that he didn't really need to know "Are you sure?" he asked instead.

"Yeah, sorry" Ron said, smiling in an embarrassed sort of way.

"Not to worry" Tonks said brightly "Harry can pretend to be Ron and I can be" Tonks closed her eyes in the way she always did when she changed her appearance "Hermione" Tonks said as her face turned into Hermione's.

"Oh, I got to do my homework" Tonks said and tried to imitate Hermione's voice "I might get just an O minus or even an E plus! And then we all have to go down to the house elves and give them clothes"

Ron and Harry laughed and soon Hermione joined them together with Neville and every one else that had seen Tonks parody of Hermione.

"We will have great fun" Tonks said and turned her face back to her normal though she left Hermione's bushy hair only changing the colour to pink. Tonks looked completely and utterly insane.

"What have you done to my hair?" Hermione wailed "You can't make it pink!"

"Is blue better?" Tonks asked and made her hair blue.

"What's wrong with brown?"

"Too common" Tonks replied "What about green?"

"Wow you look just like a Cactaceae Capillus" Neville said in a enthusiastic voice he normally saved for Herbology.

"What's that?" Tonks wondered.

"It's a hairy cactus that was used as a potion ingredient by the old Egypt's" Hermione explained before Neville had a chance. Tonks didn't seem to like looking like a hairy cactus because she changed it back to a more usual style and colour.

"So are you ready?" Tonks asked Harry as happily as ever and then whispered in his ear "Got something to drink too"

"You are a teacher!" Hissed Hermione she had apparently heard what Tonks said.

"So that's why every one calls me professor" Tonks joked, Hermione didn't find this funny at all.

"Come on Hermione, nobody's going to complain if I have a toast with my best friend and her boyfriend" Tonks said "Besides Fleur won't let him get drunk"

"Harry" Hermione said firmly "If you get drunk I'm going straight to McGonagall and I mean it this time"

“I’m not getting drunk” Harry lied, he wouldn’t mind getting drunk at all
“Besides, you are the one with fire whiskey in your trunk”

“I don’t have any fire whiskey” Hermione said crossly.

“You drunk it all?” Ron asked staring at Hermione.

“No” Hermione replied shortly “If you have to know Ginny did”

“You let her?” Ron asked angrily “She’s just... a little girl”

“She is not a little girl and I didn’t let her!”

“Ginny’s drinking fire whiskey?” Neville asked incredulously he had over heard the conversation.

“No” Ron said quickly “And don’t tell anyone”

“I won’t tell anyone that Ginny isn’t drinking?” Asked Neville uncertainly.

“See you later” Harry said and got up, he knew that Ron and Hermione would hardly notice that he left and much less now, when Neville joined the discussion.

“Not a drop Harry” Hermione said half heartedly before she rounded on Ron who just had told Neville that he was going to buy fire whiskey too.

“Maybe it’s true that Hufflepuffs are a bit slow” Tonks said as they left the great hall.

“Why is that?” Harry asked, he had never thought for a moment that Tonks was slow or thick.

“I couldn’t for my life understand your friends. It just doesn’t make any sense first Neville says that I look like an old hairy cactus from Egypt then Ginny drinks whiskey and then you can’t drink a single drop even though Hermione has a bottle of fire whiskey in her trunk”

“I don’t blame you I don’t even think Dumbledore could make anything out of that”

“Hello” Fleur said happily as they entered her office a few minutes later.

“Ron and Hermione is not coming?” She added as Tonks closed the door behind them.

“No” Harry replied and said in a meaningful tone of voice “They said they had other plans”

“Oh” Fleur giggled girlishly.

“Yeah and Longbottom said that I looked like an old hairy cactus from ancient Egypt” Tonks said sadly.

“You did have green bushy hair” Harry pointed out.

Fleur chuckled slightly “Told you. You look best blond”

”Whatever... Let’s have a drink to the dueling club” said Tonks, and opened a drawer in their desk and pulled two bottles out “Champagne or Fire Whiskey?”

Fleur glanced over at Harry nervously, she clearly did not approve of him drinking.

“I’ve been drinking before” Harry said.

“Yeah, he’s a big boy” Tonks said “I remember the first time I got drunk. I had stolen a bottle from old Kettleburn in my fourth year”

“Who’s Kettleburn?” Fleur asked as Tonks started to pour them Champagne.

“The old Care of Magical Creatures Professor” Harry explained.

“To the dueling club” Tonks said and handed them each a glass of Champagne only spilling a little.

“To the dueling club” Harry and Fleur echoed. Harry had not expected Champagne to taste like that. He had never tasted champagne before and was not pleasantly surprised by the taste. Tonks gave

Harry a daring look and finished her glass in a couple of gulps Harry smiled and did the same.

"Harry" Fleur said disapprovingly "You are not getting drunk!"

"No?" Harry asked.

"No, you are a student" Fleur said firmly.

"Not today, I had about a hundred students calling me professor this afternoon" Harry retorted teasingly "Besides I'm here as your boyfriend... you wouldn't ask a student in for Champagne would you?"

"I'm not letting you get drunk anyway" Fleur said firmly, but after Fleur's third glass of champagne she poured Harry some fire whiskey all moral forgotten. They had a very good time laughing and joking about everything.

"This is almost like the evenings in Grimmauld place" Tonks said happily.

"Yeah, but you are drunk now" Harry replied.

"So are you Wingbeat" Fleur giggled. Fleur was sitting in his lap and he was sitting on her bed.

Tonks suddenly looked very sad. She spilled fire whiskey all over her bed but didn't notice.

"What's wrong" Fleur asked in an unusual girlish voice.

"Don't you just love the first years?" Tonks asked sadly "They are so cute and innocent"

"Yeah" Fleur agreed smiling stupidly too drunk care why she was smiling.

Tonks seemed even sadder by this answered and started to cry.

"Don't cry Tonks" Harry said brightly and Fleur got up from his lap and walked over to Tonks.

“They are so wonderful” Tonks sobbed “I love them all”

Fleur sat down next to Tonks who hugged Fleur and sobbed into her shoulder.

“You two are so lucky” Tonks told them in-between sobs “To have each other”

Harry didn’t say anything, though he knew he was very lucky to have someone like Fleur.

“You will find someone too” Fleur said softly “There are load of boys who dream of having someone like you”

“Do you think so?” Tonks asked sadly “Everyone is always looking at you”

“No they are not” Fleur said softly “load of boys look at you”

“That only because I look like an old cactus” Tonks wailed and started to hiccup.

“No you don’t” Harry said “I’m a boy I know”

“You are only saying that be...” she hiccupped “...cause you want to cheer me up” Said Tonks “And it’s really nice of you Ha...” Tonks hiccupped again “...rry, you are always so nice to me even if I’m clumsy and you too Fleur I really love you both”

“We love you too Tonks” Fleur said softly.

Tonks cried even more into Fleur shoulder “It’s just I want one so badly someday, I can’t look at them with out think what it would be like”

“Men?” Fleur asked uncertainly.

“Yes them too” Tonks said sadly and hiccupped.

“What do you mean them too” Asked Fleur raising her eyebrows.

“Babies” Tonks wailed and sobbed worse then ever.

"You can have a baby" Fleur said.

"Yeah" Harry agreed.

"No I can't I don't even have a boyfriend" Tonks explained "You see it takes a boyfriend it won't work otherwise"

"You can have a boyfriend" Fleur said "I'll help you"

"It won't do any good even if I had a boyfriend. What if he comes and kills me like your parents Harry, what kind of mother would I be if I had a baby in the middle of this"

Harry had many times wished he had never been born or even killed by Voldemort that Halloween but not since he found out that Fleur truly loved him and only when he had been sad for other reasons.

"We'll get rid of him sooner or later" Fleur said rubbing Tonks back comfortingly "And then you can have loads of children"

"I'm too clumsy to have children" Tonks said sadly apparently she needed to feel miserable "What if I accidentally drop them"

"I'll help you put cushioning charms on your floor. Now let's go to bed"

"I'm so tired" Tonks said as if she was a three years old and Fleur tucked her in, Tonks fell asleep at once.

"Think she is serious?" Harry asked Fleur as they left the bedroom.

"she is mostly drunk"

"Can you get back to your dorm, or do you want to spend the night?" Fleur asked. Harry had had a little too much of girl emotions for the evening and decided that he would like to get back to his own bed.

"Nah, it's okay I'll see you tomorrow" Harry said and stumbled out of the room after a quick good night kiss. It was much easier to feel how drunk he really was when he was walking alone. He didn't have any direct problems walking though he noticed that he swung his body with every step he took in a dreamy sort of way, he couldn't help it.

He found after a couple of corridors that it was a pretty funny feeling to be walking around drunk. He was just about to turn a corner into the corridor that led to Gryffindor tower when he heard voices. Harry quickly hid himself behind a statue of Frederick Saltzgaber in his animagus form, a huge toad. Frederick Saltzgaber was famous for starting the muggle tales about kissing toads so that they would turn in to Princes.

"I don't care about the family name" A girl's voice said, by the sound of it, it was a first year.

"You better, or you'll be sorry" Draco Malfoy's voice said dangerously "I've told them that the sorting hat must have made a mistake"

"The hat did not make a mistake" The young girl voice replied, Harry realised slowly that it must be Selena Malfoy's voice, he had never hear her say more than a word at a time before.

"Yes it did! No Malfoy have ever been in Gryffindor" Draco said angrily "And you are very lucky that your parents don't think of you as a blood traitor"

There was a short pause then Draco said in a horrible voice that was clearly meant to be sweet "I haven't told them that you hang around with Potter's friends yet and you don't want me to tell them do you?"

"No, because I'm not hanging around with Potter's friends" Selena said angrily.

"Don't be stupid Selena let's make this the easy way" Draco said still in his horrible sweet voice. Harry did not have of clue of what Draco was talking about.

"Never" Selena spat "Why don't you just go tell my parents that I asked the hat to place me in Gryffindor see if I care"

"You told the hat to place you in Gryffindor" Draco hissed "You filthy blood traitor, I'll show you!"

Harry's temper rose so quickly so that before he knew what had happened he stood pointing his wand at the back of Draco Malfoy's

blond head. Draco froze he had his wand pointing at Selena who had sunken down to the floor against the wall. Selena looked at Harry horrified for a moment but then ran away towards Gryffindor tower. Before she was out of earshot, she turned around.

"Please don't tell anyone, please" Selena begged him, Harry nodded his reply. Draco who had been standing frozen seemed to figure out that who ever was pointing a wand at him could not be a teacher and turned slowly.

"Potter" Draco spat.

"Malfoy" Harry replied still pointing his wand straight at Draco's head.

"You are drunk" Malfoy realised and said it aloud.

"You are ugly" Harry replied loudly to drunk to come up with a better answer or have the sense to keep his voice down.

Draco Malfoy smiled triumphantly at him "And you are out of bed"

"So what" Harry said loudly "You are not sleeping either"

"I was on my way back to my dorm after a detention that your poor excuse for a girlfriend gave me" Malfoy said coolly.

"Say that again" Harry yelled.

"Potter, Malfoy" McGonagall's voice said from behind them.

"He's a stupid git that doesn't have enough brain to fill an egg cup" Harry said to explain why he was yelling and turned to his head of house.

"Potter has been drinking Professor" said Malfoy smirking worse then ever.

"Potter" McGonagall spat.

"But I'm only a little drunk" Harry replied quietly, he thought of what Fleur would say when she found out that he got into trouble.

“Malfoy, off you go. Potter my office now!” McGonagall commanded. Harry followed McGonagall to her office silently several times he had tried to say something to his defence but couldn’t think of a good enough lie. They entered her office and McGonagall closed the door behind them, led Harry over to the visitor chair and made him sit down.

“Have Mr Weasley been drinking too?” McGonagall asked.

“Nope” Harry replied “Hermione won’t let him”

McGonagall sighed “Explain yourself Potter”

Harry told her about how he Tonks and Fleur had celebrated the dueling club and that they finally ended up drunk all three of them.

“Professor Delacour let you drink?”

“No” Harry replied “I had a drink with Fleur she’s my girlfriend”

McGonagall didn’t reply at once so Harry took the opportunity to continue “I can’t help that my girlfriend works at my school”

“Students are not allowed to drink alcohol even if they are married to the headmaster” McGonagall replied briskly “I am very disappointed in you Potter”

“Go ahead” Harry replied angrily losing his temper slightly “But I wasn’t a student today I had about a hundred students calling me professor”

“You are a student as you are in my list of students” McGonagall said firmly “There is not without reason that alcohol is forbidden for all students Potter, it can cause damage to your body, maybe not this year or next...”

Harry burst out laughing loud. That wall that his mind had created to protect the horrible facts of the prophesy broke. McGonagall dared to talk to him about not drinking alcohol when Voldemort would probably murder him as soon as he got a good chance and even faster if he found out what the prophesy said. Harry laughed as hysterically as he

had done when Hermione had been forced to pour water on him. Tears were rolling down his cheeks and McGonagall was watching him helplessly totally shocked by his laughter.

"Maybe in ten years" Harry screeched and laughed as bad as ever.

"Yes maybe in ten years" McGonagall said hesitantly "Please control yourself Mr Potter"

"Can't" Harry yelled. McGonagall gave him a concerned glance and walked over to the fireplace.

"If you don't stop I will have to call for the headmaster" McGonagall said firmly.

"The Headmaster" Harry screeched through his laughter, a few moments later Dumbledore entered McGonagall's office through the fireplace.

"Harry?" Professor Dumbledore asked as he saw Harry laughing hysterically.

"P-Pro-fessor" Harry said unable to stop laughing. With much effort, Harry managed to say "Mc-Gon-agall tells me alcohol is dangerous when Voldemort" McGonagall startled "will kill me any day"

Dumbledore pulled his wand at and waved it at Harry. A wave of cold water erupted from Dumbledore's wand and soaked him completely, or did it? Harry stopped laughing at once and looked down at his clothes and found that they was as dry as ever he looked around him on the floor not a single drop of water anywhere.

"One of my brothers more useless spells, self-drying water" Dumbledore explained "But I find it has its charm nevertheless"

"Yeah" Harry agreed, he knew Ron would find it very funny that someone would bother to invent self-drying water "I'm sorry I laughed, I just couldn't stop myself"

"Don't be sorry Harry, peoples deal with their emotions different ways, some cry, some isolate themselves and some laugh hysterically"

Dumbledore said "As to drinking I'm not going to say anything, just that your mother would skin me alive if she knew you had been drinking while under my responsibility"

Harry looked down on his shoes he felt very much like crying like Tonks had, he felt so very sad. He wished so badly that his mother would have had the chance to tell him not to drink even though he knew that he probably would anyway.

"I didn't know" Harry said sadly.

"And as to Voldemort trying to kill you" Dumbledore said "I dare him to try, with that girlfriend of yours around" Harry felt a little bit better about Voldemort after these words, he imagined Fleur flaming him to ashes.

"Please don't blame Fleur" Harry said still looking down "We just had fun"

"You pointed your wand at a fellow student" McGonagall said briskly.

"If you knew half the thing he had said and done you wouldn't let him near Hogwarts" Harry said angrily completely losing his temper "And that goes for Snape too"

Harry regained his temper a few seconds later and realised what he had said "Sorry... I'm Sorry... I am so Sorry I just don't like them" His temper flared again and he yelled "They do everything to make life hell for me"

"Harry please" Dumbledore said kindly "Neither Snape or Malfoy are perfect but they do have some nicer qualities maybe they don't show them to you but they are there nonetheless and are therefore not worth hating. Now why don't we get you to bed. I am afraid that I can't let you go back to Gryffindor tower in your condition so unless you can't think of a better place to sleep I will have to send you to the hospital wing"

"What do you mean better place to sleep" Harry asked irritably.

“Unless I am much mistaken you won’t have any problems finding a place to sleep” Dumbledore said keeping his gentle tone even though Harry was more than rude.

“Surly Albus you can suggest that Potter is too...” McGonagall said firmly.

“But I do Minerva” Dumbledore interrupted gently “Harry is a very decent boy”

Harry was utterly bewildered he wondered for a moment if he was going to sleep in Hagrid’s hut and then he wondered if this was some kind of odd punishment that he was not allowed to sleep in a bed. Then it hit him hard, Fleur had asked him if he wanted to spend the night.

“Would you find a place to sleep?” Dumbledore asked.

“Yes” Harry said, he found it a bit odd that Dumbledore didn’t just ask him if he could stay with Fleur but then he figured that it must break every school rule regarding Student Teacher relationships.

“Good off you go” Dumbledore said.

“What about my punishment?” Harry asked “I broke several school rules”

“I can’t blame my staff for having their love ones over for a drink and I can’t blame you for enjoying yourself in times like this” Dumbledore said “But you must promise me to not go wandering the corridors if this ever occurs again and that you will think of what your mother would say”

“But what about Draco Malfoy, he’ll think you are favouring me even more if I don’t get some sort of punishment”

“As a headmaster of a large school I can very seldom make a decision that everyone is pleased with, my decision now is to send you off to bed even if some students might find it unfair” Dumbledore explained firmly “Now off you go before I have to take points from you for not doing as I ask”

"Thanks Professor Dumbledore, you too Professor McGonagall sorry I kept you up" Harry said happily as he got up from his chair and walked over to the door.

"Not to worry I happen to own a time turner and I know that if anyone happens to look in my bedroom they will find me fast asleep this very moment" Dumbledore said happily.

Harry walked quickly up to the third floor towards Fleur's office he didn't feel drunk at all any more just a little dizzy. He hesitated for a moment on whether or whether not to knock on the door. He decided to knock since he didn't want to scare Fleur or Tonks by just walking into their room in the dead of night.

He knocked several times before a very tired Fleur opened the door.

"Whazzamatterarry" She snored.

"I got lonely" Harry replied and entered Fleur hugged him and fell asleep standing up leaning against his shoulder, she drooled on his robes but Harry didn't care. With some effort Harry managed to get her back into bed, he slipped out of most of his clothes and lay down next to her. He took her hand in his and fell asleep as peacefully as he ever had.

"Oooh, my poor head" Tonks groaned softly the following morning.

"Sorry if I woke you" Tonks whimpered as she saw that he opened his eyes.

"What time is..." Harry trailed off as he felt Fleur sleeping besides him. Fleur was very warm cosy he still held her hand and squeezed it gently. He noticed that their heart rhythms matched exactly, it was almost as if they shared bodies. Fleur opened her eyes as if she was a doll and smiled at him. Then her smile faded and she her eyes looked over at him as if she might be dreaming.

"Didn't you leave for Gryffindor tower last night?"

"Yes" Harry replied and put his arm around Fleur.

“But why are you here then?”

Harry told her about being found by Malfoy and that Dumbledore had asked him not to return to his dormitory. Fleur seemed to hate herself for losing control and letting Harry get drunk even though Harry told her, several times that Dumbledore didn't blame either of them.

“Can't you two stop talking and just kill me” Tonks said croaked “Or you won't have too I'll die soon all by myself”

“I'll whip you up a hang over potion” Fleur said brightly “Need some too Wingbeat?”

“No I'm fine” Harry said, he didn't feel bad at all and judging by how Fleur acted she felt fine too.

“It's kind of nice” Fleur said as they left Tonks in the bedroom and started to get Fleur's potion ingredient and cauldron ready “I always have a terrible hangover, but today nothing, too bad about Tonks though”

“Hmm” Harry replied agreeingly he had never had a hangover and didn't have anything to say on the subject.

“Do as the book says” Fleur said and hurried into the bedroom Tonks who had judging by the sounds coming from the hidden door been violently sick. Harry finished the potion easily and poured into a glass.

Tonks looked as if she was going to throw up by the mere sight of a glass but managed to force the hang over potion down.

“Promise me that you won't ever let me drink again, just stun me if I don't listen” Tonks whimpered looking very pale. The hangover potion seemed to be nothing more than a painkiller and a mild sleeping potion because Tonks said good night and went back to sleep.

Harry and Fleur decided to get a late breakfast and walked down to the great hall. Harry waited a few moments before entering so that it wouldn't seem as if they had spent the night together.

“Oh there you are Harry I was so worried” Hermione said as he approached her and Ron at the Gryffindor table “The most ridiculous rumour is flying around, every one especially the Slytherins seems to believe that McGonagall found you drunk in the corridors and that you yelled things at her about Snape and Malfoy. But of course they can be true since we haven’t lost any house points and you don’t seem to have the slightest bit of a hangover”

“How very ridiculous people can be” Harry said in a high-pitched voice.

“Yes...” Hermione said slowly glancing at him as if to see what he meant by using a so high-pitched voice.

“It’s true” Ron realised “You got drunk and yelled at McGonagall”

“Quiet” Hermione hissed at her boyfriend “What happened, Harry?”

“I’ll tell you later” Harry said and later after breakfast when they were alone walking around the lake Harry told them what had happened though he didn’t mention Tonks’s desire for babies or that he had shared bed with Fleur but he did tell them every thing about the Malfoy’s.

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Gee... wonder if anyone is reading this... lol! Please Review if you feel like it!

Next chapter is chapter nineteen “Some Slytherins”. Thanks again Travis Smith for beta reading!

Chapter 19 Some Slytherins

A few days later Harry managed to get alone with Selena to ask her about her cousin and what had happened that night in the corridor. It had been very hard to catch her she was very good at not being noticed in the corridors and during the meals. All her free time she seemed to spend in her dormitory. Harry had finally decided just to wait outside the fat Lady until she had to pass him.

Harry, Ron and Hermione had agreed on doing something to help Selena settle in and keep Draco away from her. Ron and Hermione had thought it best if Harry approached her alone and asked about Draco since she had asked Harry not to tell anyone.

Harry stood partly hidden from view if you came from the portrait so Selena didn't see him at first. She poked her head out from the entrance to Gryffindor common room when the fat Lady swung open. It was almost heart aching to see how she looked wildly around the corridor. She resembled a little mouse looking out of her hole in the ground wondering if there was a cat nearby. Harry stayed hidden he doubted that Selena wanted to be cornered by him so he decided to wait. Selena tripped silently down the first set of stairs looking around in all directions, her eyes landed on Harry and she froze.

"Hello, Selena" Harry said awkwardly. Selena didn't reply at once she seemed to go through some sort of inner panic

"Hi" She finally said and made to get past him towards the great hall.

"Selena, can I have a moment?" Harry asked stepping in front of her blocking her way.

"It's dinner" Selena said coldly "can't it wait?"

"No, it can't" Harry said firmly.

"Please I'm really, really hungry" Selena pleaded changing tactics from coldness to politeness.

"Would you rather talk to me during dinner?" Harry asked.

"No" Selena exclaimed, she seemed horror struck by the very idea "I mean... I usually eat alone"

"Please Harry" Selena begged desperately.

"We could have dinner somewhere else" Harry said trying to logic with her.

"No way Potter" Selena spat "You already have a girlfriend"

Harry knew that she only said this to anger him enough so that he would give up on her, but he wouldn't let her get away so easy.

"Sorry, I didn't mean it like that... would you rather talk to Hermione?" Harry asked, he didn't care who she talked to as long as she told someone.

"You told her?" Selena snapped fixing her eyes at him instead of the corridor leading down towards the great hall "You promised you wouldn't tell anyone and then you go tell a prefect!"

"Selena, please"

"You should have been in Slytherin" Saline said accusingly "I thought Gryffindors kept their promises"

"Sorry" Harry replied, and figured that he would have to earn Selena's trust "And you are right I would have been in Slytherin"

"Don't lie Potter" Selena said in a very Malfoyish way "Your mudblood mother was a Gryffindor and so was your father"

Harry suddenly understood why Hermione had been so upset to hear Selena use the word mudblood. When Selena said it, it sounded a hundred times worse then when Draco Malfoy said it. However, Harry had already decided that he was not going to let Selena get away until she had told him or someone else what happened. Harry took a deep breath and swallowed.

"That hurt" He said truthfully, trying to make her realise that he loved his mother even if she had been muggle-born and that muggle-borns was not anything less worth than purebloods.

"Don't lie then" Selena said though she looked a little taken aback.

Harry sighed "Look I'm sorry I told Hermione I didn't tell her because she's a prefect and the sorting hat really considered putting me in Slytherin mostly because I'm a parselmouth I think"

"Right" Selena said looking nervously up and down the corridor. Harry knew that she was dreading being seen by anyone together with him.

"Let's go in here" Harry said and pulled aside a tapestry that led into a hidden corridor he had found on the marauders map. The chances of anyone walking in on them there was very small especially now that the Weasley twins were out of school.

"You don't have to tell me anything, but you have to talk to someone if Malf... I mean Draco troubles you" Harry said when they had walked long enough into the corridor not to be overheard by anyone that might walk by the tapestry.

"It's okay, Draco is just stupid" Selena said dismissively "I won't leave my dorm again so he won't be able to threat me"

"Not that it is any of my business" Harry said carefully "But are you're parents okay with you being a Gryffindor"

Selena looked down on her shoes "They won't write to me, not that I care I don't want to see them ever again"

Harry wasn't surprised though he felt very bad for Selena "What about the holydays?"

"I'll stay here" Selena said sadly and turned her back at him so that he couldn't see her face.

"What about the summer holyday?"

Harry could tell by the way Selena shivered that she was sobbing quietly.

“Don’t, cry” Harry said, he wondered for a moment if something about him made girls cry “We’ll, think of something”

“Like what?” Selena said bitterly and turned to him “I don’t have a single galleon and no one not even relatives to live with”

Harry grabbed her hand hoping to sooth her. It was nothing like holding Fleur’s hand even though Selena had a warm and soft little hand.

“You do have nice relatives” Harry said rubbing her hand gently, he’d had some practise comforting girls since he met Fleur “Your uncle Lucius’s wife’s sister and her daughter”

“Bella doesn’t have a daughter she’s in Azkaban with uncle Lucius”

“No... haven’t they told you?” Asked Harry, but then he figured that as far as the Malfoy’s were concerned Andromeda, Sirius favourite cousin was no longer family “Draco’s mother had two sisters, Bellatrix and Tonks’s mum”

“What?” Selena asked looking up at him in disbelief “They would have told me”

“Not if Tonks’s mother married a muggle...”

“How do you know all this?” Selena asked suspiciously “I thought you knew Delacour not Tonks?”

“I know her too but she didn’t tell me, Sirius Black was my godfather” Harry explained smiling sadly at the memory of Sirius telling Harry about his family more then a year ago. He was almost painfully open with Selena but he knew that if he wanted her to tell him stuff he would have to tell her.

“Oh, right father told me he was innocent” Selena said sounding just like Draco “used to laugh when the daily prophet wrote about how evil he was”

"Yeah, well anyway" Harry said stirring the subject away from Sirius "We'll think of something if your parents..."

"I don't care if they will have me for the summer because I won't come" Selena said firmly "I would rather live on the streets like a mud... muggle"

"Don't be stupid Selena, no one's going to force you to live on the streets" Harry said smiling gently "You are a Gryffindor now and Gryffindors take care of each other"

"So that's why no one will talk to me" Selena spat and tore her hand from him, she clearly had the Malfoy sarcasm "I got so many good little nice friends in Gryffindor!"

"I'll be you're friend" Harry offered hoping he could help Selena to become as happy he had been in his first year.

"Right" Selena said angrily "You don't fool me Potter! You just want to be friends with me to annoy my cousin"

Harry gritted his teeth, he felt a surge of hatred but it wasn't only directed at Selena it was most direct at Draco.

"Fine, you don't need to be friends with me I won't make you" Harry snapped "If you plan to behave like your family I don't want anything to do with you"

"That's just fine with me! I don't need your help!" Selena yelled and ran away but she didn't run far since Harry pulled her back in her robes. He had made up his mind about Selena and he was sure that she could be very happy if she just settled in a little.

"I'm sorry I snapped at you" Harry said firmly as Selena tried to fight him off "I have no interest in using you to annoy your cousin besides Fleur won't let me teach the dueling club if cause trouble"

"Why would she tell you to not get into any trouble, you can't get into trouble you are the-boy-who-freaking-lived" Selena spat but stopped trying to fight him off.

"She did" Said Harry resolutely "And if I want to annoy your cousin I just have to mention Azkaban"

"He will kill you at the first chance he gets?"

"Yepp, so just tell him to get inline after his dad, the rest of the death eaters, and Voldemort" Harry replied Selena startled at the sound of Voldemort's name.

"Don't say the dark Lords name!" She hissed as if Voldemort would be able to hear them if she spoke normally.

"Listen Selena, we don't have to be friends if you don't want to but if you want to be my friend Draco doesn't need to know about it"

"All right" Selena said "but only if Draco hears nothing about it otherwise I will curse you with curses that..."

"You know what, now that we are friends we got to get that Slytherin attitude out of you" Harry interrupted teasingly hoping that Selena would take it the right way. None of them said anything for several moments, Selena was clearly thinking hard of what she should do.

"Sorry about calling your mother you-know-what" Selena finally said earnestly.

"It's okay" Harry replied "and, yeah I almost forgot, you can't call Voldemort the Dark Lord only death eaters do that"

"You can't call him by his name only dead people and Dumbledore does that" Selena retorted.

"Hermione calls him by his name" Harry said "And she is the smartest students since Tom Marvolo Riddle"

"Tom Marvolo Riddle?" Selena said uncertainly raising an eyebrow.

Harry chuckled, he new it was a childish joke but couldn't think of anything better to loosen the mood "You just called him by his name"

"What" Selena asked "What's this Tom got to do with anything?"

"I'll show you" Harry said and pulled out his wand "About Fifty years ago there was this orphan Slytherin named Tom Riddle after his father. His mother had died giving birth to him or something and his muggle father Tom had abandoned them when he had found out that she was a witch"

"That's sad" Selena said "Muggles are so stupid"

"Not all muggles are stupid" Harry said but couldn't think of a single muggle he knew well that wasn't stupid "anyway look at this" He waved his wand the same way Tom Riddle had done down in the chamber and letters appeared floating in the air spelling Tom Marvolo Riddle.

"Let's see" Harry said and started rearranging the letters so that they spelled 'I am Lord Voldemort' instead. He didn't manage to make it as neatly as Tom had but it was still readable.

"I am..." Selena read but stopped abruptly when she figured out what the letters said.

"You tricked me saying his name" Selena said accusingly smiling brightly.

"Oh, come on loads of peoples are named Tom Riddle" Harry replied and then stared wide eyed down the passage "Oh my god he is here!"

Selena turned around quickly and drew her wand she didn't know Harry well enough yet to know that he was joking. Harry supposed that she didn't really expect Voldemort to turn up, but Draco and that was just as bad to her. She soon figured out however that he had tricked her and cursed him with the jelly leg jinx.

"Ha" Selena exclaimed as Harry's legs became as stable as jelly completely unable to carry his weight. He sat down painfully on the stone floor and leaned against the wall.

"Cursed by a first year" Harry muttered "Have you ever thought about joining the dueling club?" Selena Malfoy had been one of the few Gryffindors not to attend.

“Draco would like that wouldn’t he?” Selena asked sarcastically.

“I could ask not to teach the first years” Harry offered “We wouldn’t even have to look at each other”

“Are you sure ‘cause Draco will kill me if he suspects anything” Saline said seriously, she was clearly terrified of Draco.

“I won’t let him kill you besides he won’t know” Harry said firmly “first to fourth years are meeting at Fridays and I doubt that Draco has any friends in those years especially as there are no Slytherins at all attending”

“I’ll think about it” Selena promised. A few minutes later Selena left the secret passage. Harry waited back a few moments so that no one would suspect they had even seen each other. Just when he was about to pull the tapestry aside someone from the outside did it, Harry startled and drew his wand quickly. He took a deep breath of relief when he recognized one of Tonks more usual pink hairstyles.

“Oh” Tonks startled and fell back on the stone floor hard “Ouch, damn it Harry did you have to scare me like that?”

“Sorry” Harry said and pulled her up from the floor as he so usual did.

“How did... were you looking for me?” Harry asked uncertainly.

“I got to ask Remus to make me one of these” She said pulling out the Marauders’ map from her pocket “You wouldn’t miss it too much if I borrowed it for a few days so that I can learn it?”

“Sure” Harry replied putting his wand back. Tonks gave him a calculating teasing look.

“You are just not letting me borrow it so that I won’t tell Fleur you have been with a younger woman?” Tonks asked teasingly.

“I thought you said the first years are innocent” Harry replied.

“Yeah, but she’s a girl. Girls are never innocent” Tonks explained grinning widely.

"Some are" Harry said.

"No they are not" Tonks said shortly and gave him a pitying look
"Trust me Harry"

"So why are you not innocent?" Harry asked teasingly.

"Perhaps because someone put flies in Filch's soup" Tonks said and smiled her most innocent smile.

Harry laughed "If Fleur figures that out you will have detentions for a week"

"Nah not a chance Filch didn't even notice a thing. He's too used to have insects put in his food, bet he even complains if it isn't crunchy. Anyway Fleur thought I was laughing because I miss transformed my nose and got tickled by some nose hair" Tonks said happily "So what did you and sweet young Miss Malfoy talk about?"

Harry spent that evening in the dark art professor's room. Tonks asked him several times that evening to tell her everything about what had happened in that passage. Every time Harry said that Selena had cried Tonks looked as if she wanted to cry too and laughed loudly every time Harry told her about being hit with the jelly leg jinx. Fleur finally put a stop to Tonks questions when it approached midnight and Harry wandered back to his dorm. He had of course arranged with Fleur and Tonks so that if Selena chose to attend the dueling club he would not teach her.

He saw Tonks and Fleur the next morning as a student in the defence against the dark arts classroom. They had a very funny lesson reversing confundus charms. Some of Tonks's mirrors had been confounded so that they thought that whoever looked inside them was a girl. Not every one received a confounded mirror it was a part of the task to identify the confounded mirrors. Each house got at least one, Tonks made sure that Harry and Ron got a confounded mirror each.

Harry suffered a few very embarrassing moments with his mirror when it flirted madly with him in a deep male voice, he realised however what was going on when Tonks had to leave the room so

that she could laugh freely outside for a minute. Harry glanced around in the room to see who else had gotten a confounded mirror, he saw to his pleasure that Malfoy was sitting in the other end of the classroom scarlet faced with a mirror who called him "My little veela girl" in a voice somewhat like Hagrid's.

Harry had very hard time keeping his face strait this was pure torture. Fleur had tremendous problems keeping her face strait too. He could even feel her desire to laugh when she had eye contact with him. He figured this had to be her veela power running wild. He wondered for a moment before he started to work on his mirror if Fleur was aware that she was sending out her desire to laugh to anyone who had eye contact with her. He never asked Fleur anything about her being a veela, he knew it was a very sensitive subject for her and settled with what she told him.

There was a sharp knock on the door and half a second later, it opened, the class turned their heads to see who was there.

"Fleur, could I borrow Weasley for a moment?" McGonagall asked.

"It's all right" Ron's mirror said to him in a voice a little like Kingsley's "play with your little friend I'll wait here for you baby"

McGonagall looked questionably up at Fleur she clearly didn't like being addressed as little friend.

"Confundus charm, we are practising curse braking" Fleur explained gently.

"I see, in that case I wont keep you long Mr Weasley" McGonagall said, the class laughed though Harry doubted that McGonagall had meant it like a joke.

Ron returned a few moments later grinning widely as if he had suddenly realised that it was his birthday.

"What?" Asked Hermione in a whisper not to be over heard by Fleur or Tonks, which was completely unnecessary as every one was having too much fun to notice anything unless you yelled.

"First years had flying lessons today" Ron said still grinning very widely.

"So" Asked Hermione.

"McGonagall usually observes them from her office. She found us a third chaser!"

"Who" Harry asked eagerly perhaps they had a chance at the Quidditch cup after all.

"Miss Malfoy" Ron said gleefully "Can you imagine Draco's face when he finds out that his dear cousin is on the Quidditch team with you"

"Ron seriously, I told you she is terrified of Draco" Harry said sternly but couldn't stop grinning.

"Yeah you can't breathe a word about that, or I bet Selena will leave the team quicker then you can eat a chocolate frog" Hermione said.

"Okay, okay not a word" Ron promised "But it's not as if I would let her resign even if there were a hundred Draco's"

"Isn't it odd though" Harry said "First years are not allowed a broom and now McGonagall has broken that rule twice in six years"

"She hasn't really broken any rule, just bent them a little" Hermione said brightly "There is no rule that says that first years are not allowed to play Quidditch, the only rule is that first years are not allowed to have their own broom"

"Harry got a broom in his first year" Ron stated.

"No not technically I figure, Harry didn't buy his broom and bring it into Hogwarts did he?" Hermione asked not expecting an answer "You didn't technically own a broom you just kept one of the team brooms"

"But she gave it to me"

"That's why she bent the rules" Hermione stated "but no one could really say anything since McGonagall just would have to claim that Harry didn't have his own broom in his trunk just a team broom and show the recite"

Harry and Ron stared at her, it had never occurred to either of them to figure out why Harry was allowed to have a broom in his first year. It had been enough just to have a broom.

"All the School rules can be found in Hogwarts a history" Ron said sarcastically in a rather good impression for a teenage boy of Hermione's voice.

"They can be found in Filch's office and in the Library" Hermione said coolly.

"Not in Hogwarts a history" Ron said surprised.

"Well some of them" Hermione admitted Ron raised an eyebrow disbelievingly "Right most of them, but not the new ones since the latest addition of Hogwarts a history came out 89"

"So the rule about brooms?" Ron pressed on.

Hermione didn't reply instead she begun to read the chapter about confounds charm and pretended to be busy.

Selena turned up the following day at the dueling club, Harry just noticed her and caught her eye for a fraction of a second before he started teaching the second years and some third years Expelliarmus, the third years helped the second years and at the end of the class when everyone knew at least expelliarmus they dueled. They had a very good time.

On Saturday morning, they had their first Quidditch practise Selena ignored everyone except the beaters and Katie who she seemed to consider safe as they were not too close to Harry. McGonagall had provided her with a Cleansweep 11, it was a good broom especially as it was cheaper than the Nimbus 2000 and about as good. To Harry's, Ron's and probably Selena's relief there was not a single Slytherin in the stands like last year.

Selena really was a very good flyer, at least as good as Harry had been on his first practise. However, Selena had been flying since the age of eight. Unfortunately, the beaters were just as horrible as last year, but compared to Fred and George every beater would seem horrible. Harry snapped back to life as he spotted the snitch half way down the field. He urged his Firebolt towards it and within second held the struggling Snitch firmly in his hand.

"Excellent Harry" Ron yelled from the goal posts "We got time for one more catch let it go!"

"Ron, please" Ginny said "We've been here for hours and it's lunch soon" Harry was glad to hear Ginny acting normal and not snapping or hissing at everyone.

"Yes, we better get up earlier next Saturday" Ron said thoughtfully for a moment before turning back to Harry "Let it go Harry! The sooner you catch it the sooner Ginny can have lunch"

Harry caught the Snitch again a few minutes later and hurried off to get a shower before lunch, he was in a hurry because right after lunch he was supposed to teach the dueling club. He arrived lunch a little late and noticed at once when he saw Fleur sitting up at the staff table that something was wrong. Fleur gave him a very apologetic look he could feel her veela powers telling him that she was very sorry about something. Harry found Hermione sitting alone at the Gryffindor table with her nose deep inside his copy of Dueling for Masters. He wondered for a moment if Fleur had broken up with him and had given his book back through Hermione, but Fleur wouldn't do that, not without telling him anyway.

"You got the book" Harry asked nervously, not sure if he wanted to hear her answer.

"Yeah, they are done with it so she gave it back to me before lunch" Hermione explained still very focused on the book.

"Did you speak to her?"

"Who... oh Fleur yes" Hermione said finally looking up from the book, she gave him a very guilty look.

“What did you talk about?”

“I’m sorry Harry but I think she has persuaded some Slytherins to join the dueling club”

“Some Slytherins?” Harry asked irritably “Tell me!”

“You better ask Fleur” Hermione said apologetically.

“And why is that” Harry snapped now feeling thoroughly frustrated.

“Because...” Hermione said nervously “Because... she wants to tell you herself”

“Is it Malfoy” Harry asked angrily, he couldn’t imagine any other Slytherin that would cause Hermione to not tell him.

“No, not that we know of” Hermione replied.

“Fine” Harry spat and got up from the table “I’ll just have to ask Fleur then” Harry walked quickly up to the staff table to where Fleur sat next to Tonks.

“What’s going on” He asked them.

“I’m so sorry Harry, I know you don’t like him and all but we really had no choice” Fleur said apologetically.

“What choice” Harry asked sharply.

“To get Slytherins to join” Fleur explained sadly “I spoke with Minerva and she agrees”

“Agrees with what?” Snapped Harry, he knew that Fleur must have done something bad or at least Harry would think it was bad.

“Let’s take a walk” She said and got up from her seat. Harry looked over at Tonks for some kind of explanation but she focused completely on her food and did look back at him.

Harry followed Tonks out of the great hall and out of the castle. Harry thought a million thought’s each more horrible then the other. By the

time, Fleur stopped and grabbed his hand they were standing next to the lake. Harry had prepared himself to hear anything from Remus being dead as well, to that Fleur didn't love him anymore.

"I spoke to Snape the other day" Fleur said guiltily.

"About the dueling club" She added when Harry didn't reply.

"You still love me?" Harry asked quickly he couldn't help it he had to know.

Fleur smiled and squeezed his hand so that he clearly could feel her heartbeat "Can't you feel it?"

"Yes... but then what?" Harry said feeling warm relief pulsing through his body.

"I spoke to Snape the other day and... well he said that there was no way the Slytherins would join since they didn't think there were any competent teachers"

"So" Harry pressed on not surprised that Snape would tell Fleur in her face that the Slytherins thought she was unqualified.

"Well he's right in a way Tonks a Hufflepuff and you are a Gryffindor and I am not a Slytherin so there is really no wonder that the Slytherins would feel awkward attending" Fleur explained "I mean if Snape taught dueling you wouldn't join would you?"

"No I wouldn't" Harry said he had a horribly feeling that Fleur was going to tell him something terrible any moment.

"Besides there are almost too many students as it is, if we were going to have Slytherins too we would need an extra teacher"

Harry suddenly realized what Fleur was telling him "No way! Never, not a chance, Snape is not going to teach!"

"Harry please" Fleur winced "You are crushing my hand"

“Sorry” Harry said and realised his grip “but Snape is not going near the great hall while I am...”

“It is already decided” Fleur whispered not meeting his eyes.

“WHAT” Harry yelled “YOU DECIDED TO LET HIM TEACH WITH OUT ME?”

“Sorry” Fleur said in a very small voice looking down.

“SO MY DA TURNS INTO A DUELING CLUB AND THEN YOU JUST DECIDE TO BRING SNAPE IN? I STARTED IT ALMOST A YEAR AGO AND NOW I DON’T EVEN HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY ABOUT IT?”

“Sorry” Fleur muttered sadly.

“Is that all you got to say? Because I can tell you that I am much sorrier then you” Harry hissed “You could at least have asked me first”

“I am sorry” Fleur said, Harry now noticed that Fleur really was sorry because she had tears rolling down her cheeks, and when he looked her in her eyes he could feel her sorrow thanks to her veela powers.

“Just don’t expect me to go anyway near any of them” Harry said grumpily, he couldn’t be angry with Fleur if she was crying it just wasn’t possible.

“You won’t have to Harry, we’ll teach a house each. You can teach Gryffindor if you want to, I will teach Ravenclaw, Tonks Hufflepuff and Snape Slytherin” Fleur said quickly, relieved that Harry wasn’t too angry at her anymore “We’ll have four rings, you can have number one and Snape will have to settle with number four”

“Right” Harry said, it didn’t seem to horrible any more he could just teach his Gryffindors and Snape wouldn’t be near enough to say or do anything.

“Let’s get the great hall ready” Harry said as he watched his wristwatch “They will be there in twenty minutes”

“No” Fleur replied shortly “You are going down to the kitchens to get some lunch, I don’t want you to be cranky ‘cause you haven’t eaten enough”

“What am I your little baby?” Harry asked as they begun walking back to the castle hand in hand.

“It’s not my fault you tend to get cranky when you don’t eat properly” Fleur teased.

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Hmmm so what do you think? Did I make Harry a little bit too eager too befriend Selena?

Have you ever heard that story about St George and the dragon? Well any way St George saves a city in Libya from a terrible dragon. Can you guess what that city was named?

“Selena” of course! Isn’t that a funny coincidence?

No I am not matching Selena Malfoy with George Weasley... that is a real coincidence besides Selena is way too young to do anything more then giggle and blush.

I let Fleur break down a little when Harry got angry, she is not ready yet to have fights with him.

Next chapter is a really long one with loads of action.

Chapter 20 Snape, Snake, Selena, Spiders and Screams

Harry ate a quick lunch in the kitchens that the house elves were very pleased to serve, to say the very least. He entered the great hall just in time for the dueling club to start. Instead of three dueling rings there were now four and half the Slytherins seemed to be there as well.

Harry gritted his teeth and walked resolutely up to the staff platform, where Fleur, Tonks and Snape stood waiting. Snape glared at him probably thinking of things to make Harry look stupid. Harry ignored Snape completely he didn't want anything to do with him whatsoever and he wouldn't let Snape get to him. When he reached the staff platform, he turned and faced the great hall.

"As some of you may have noticed" Fleur announced "We have from this day and forward a new teacher, please welcome Professor Snape to the dueling club"

The Slytherins applauded, and some males in the other houses as well mostly, Harry figured because Fleur had requested it.

"We have also decided to teach one house each, I will teach Ravenclaw in the third ring, Professor Tonks Hufflepuff in the second, Mr Potter Gryffindor in the first and Professor Snape Slytherin in the fourth of course"

"I think that's all?" Fleur asked the other teachers.

"Actually" Snape said unpleasantly "Some students seem to doubt Mr Potters teaching ability he is after all only a sixth year and quite incompetent"

It was clear to Harry at that very moment that as far as Snape considered he had much more authority and right to decide what went on in the dueling club than Fleur and Tonks. Fleur seemed to realise this too because she pushed her lips into a thin line and looked just as much a Professor as McGonagall.

"Perhaps Mr Potter would care to give those who doubt a little demonstration" Snape said unpleasantly.

“Very well” Harry said loudly “What did you have in mind”

Snape glared at him for a moment Harry knew that Snape wanted him to call him Professor.

“Perhaps a duel would be enough since you are teaching dueling” Snape said as if he was explaining to Harry that one and one made two, the Slytherins laughed. Fleur looked as if she wanted to sprout feathers and flame Snape at the spot.

“Jolly good” Harry said in forced happiness to tell Fleur that he didn’t care what Snape said.

“Malfoy” Snape commanded, Draco Malfoy stepped forward from the crowd smirking as badly as ever.

“First Ring Potter” Snape said also smirking.

“Very well Snape” Harry replied, very deliberately not saying professor. Harry started to walk down the platform but as he passed Snape, Snape grabbed his arm.

“I told you call me Professor!” Snape hissed silently.

“I am not your student here” Harry retorted and pulled his arm away from Snape “This is my dueling club I started it almost a year ago”

“Twenty points from Gryffindor” Snape said coolly. Harry glared at Snape for a moment before he turned around and walk down to the ring, Draco Malfoy was already standing at one side of it waiting for him.

Harry drew his wand and bowed, so did Malfoy.

“At the count of three...” Fleur said before Snape had a chance to “One... Two...T”

Draco had already begun waving his wand and sent a jet of blue flames from it at Harry. Harry who had expected Draco to duel dirty had no problem side stepping the curse.

“Reaktus” Harry muttered and waved his wand at himself, he expected Draco to do the same but to his surprise Draco didn’t apparently Draco had never been taught how to duel properly.

Harry looked questionably at Snape as if to ask him if Draco was a joke of some kind but Snape didn’t look at him he was glaring straight at Malfoy.

Draco cast another jet of flames at Harry, which he side stepped without any problems now that his reflexes were about twice as fast as usual.

“As some of you might have seen” Harry said slowly to make his voice sound as fast as normal to the crowd. “I performed an agility charm on myself so that I don’t have any problems...” Draco shot another curse at him “...dodging curses”

“Normally” Harry said and dodged another curse from Draco “I would stun Mr Malfoy to end the duel quickly, but since I already have my wand drawn I might just as well demonstrate a few hexes first”

“Engorgio Crura” Harry said and waved his wand at Draco, it hit him straight in his legs “Is a funny alternative to the leg locker curse”

Draco’s legs swelled and became as thick as tree trunks much too heavy to walk with.

“Finite Engorgio” Draco cried and managed to shrink his legs enough to be able to walk with them though they were still very swollen.

Harry continued to demonstrate different hexes and jinxes until the Reaktus curse wore off. Draco Malfoy was so thoroughly cursed by now that he was hardly recognizable. Harry had made sure that Draco kept standing with his wand in his hand so that no one could call the duel off until he was done with Draco.

“Expelliarmus” Harry cried, his curse hit Draco hard in his chest and he flew several yards back before he landed softly on the floor. Draco’s wand flew high in the air and Harry banished it back to Draco before it even started to descend.

"Would Mr Crabbe and Mr Goyle please escort Mr Malfoy off the ring" Harry said politely. The students who were watching except the Slytherins applauded loudly when they realised that Harry was done. Harry felt very good with himself, he had cursed Malfoy beyond recognition in front of Snape and not only gotten away with it he had half the school cheering for him because of it. Harry looked up at Snape it would be very fun to duel with to get a chance to duel with Snape too Malfoy had not tired him the slightest. He glanced over at Snape who was glaring at him from the staff platform.

"Now Snape, I think there might be some students doubting your ability as a dueller as well seeing as you are new here" Harry said calmly but regretted the words a moment after he had said them. Snape was glaring at him worse then ever and muscle in his jaw was flinching madly.

Harry swallowed he had forgotten how mad Snape could get, and he had just given Snape a chance to curse him seriously without anyone complaining. Snape must be a very good dueler to have survived as long as he had as a spy for Dumbledore and Harry would of course not stand a chance. He vaguely remembered Sirius telling him that Snape knew more dark arts then some of the seventh years when they had been in their first year.

Harry's fear faded just as quickly as it had arrived, he thought of all the things Snape had said and done. Snape had been a part of the cause of Sirius death and he had called his mum a mudblood and he had poisoned Hermione and thrown Ron out of his potion class. Harry found that he wanted very badly to curse Snape even if Snape cursed him ten times worse in return.

"Very well Potter" Snape spat and climbed into the ring at the opposite end.

"Both Mr Potter an Professor Snape will of course only cast harmless spells" Fleur said as if she was worried that they might try and kill each other. Harry and Snape bowed "One... Two... Three"

Harry quickly waved his wand over him and performed the agility charm keeping a close watch at Snape at the same time. Snape too seemed to perform an agility charm. Harry performed a shield charm

that would protect him against Expelliarmus once. He had a feeling Snape wanted to hit him hard with the disarming spell since Harry had used it on him in his third year.

Snape was, as Harry had feared a very good dueler he was extraordinary fast and had an almost perfect aim. Within a few minutes Snape had the upper hand and Harry was forced to block and dodge curses instead of sending anything back.

Snape had a very strategic dueling technique, 'Dueling for Masters' had described different patterns to block and attack but Harry had never understood what they were supposed to be like until now Snape seemed almost to be dancing. Never for even a short moment holding his wand still always waving it softly through the air and every time it pointed at Harry Snape uttered an incantation.

Before Harry realised it himself, he was waving his wand in a similar way and every now and then forced Snape to jump out of the way of a curse or even block it. Harry soon found a wand pattern to use against Snape and as he did, Snape adjusted his pattern to force Harry to change his. This was dueling on a completely new level to Harry he had never even suspected that dueling could be anything like this. It was as if the spells didn't matter at all because they were each and every one final. Harry didn't send anything friendlier than expelliarmus and neither did Snape.

Harry and Snape continued for what seemed like hours of dueling, each forcing the other to change his pattern over and over again every now and then one of them would brake the patterns hoping to surprise the other. Snape had become very frustrated and started casting curses with increased magnitude to hurt Harry even if he dodged it. Harry did the same and they were both hauling small explosions at each other. Snape managed to burn Harry's robes pretty badly at one point but not enough for them to catch fire.

Harry was thinking through Dueling for Masters hoping to find a way to end this duel. He remembered that it said to use your abilities full out and to use them well especially if you opponent didn't have them. Perhaps Harry could disturb Snape's pattern bad enough to curse him if he conjured a snake and told it to watch out for Snape's curses

so that Snape would have two enemies. He didn't want to speak parselmouth in front of anyone but if that was what it took to beat Snape it was worth it besides everyone already knew he was a parselmouth.

Harry had never conjured a snake before but he knew the incantation was Serpensortia and he figured that he probably needed to focus hard on a snake to manage it correctly. It was remarkably easy to focus on a snake he realised, perhaps because he had been a snake last Christmas when Voldemort had attacked Mr Weasley. He focused as hard as he could on a snake what they felt like, how they sounded and how they acted.

Harry opened his mouth to say Serpensortia but no human sound escaped his lips he had been focusing so hard on snakes that he hissed in parseltongue instead. Harry thought for a moment that he had made a complete fool out of himself failing so completely to conjure a snake but he soon found that he was badly mistaken.

He felt a huge weight at the end of his wand and turned it down towards the floor to easier hold on to it. It all happened very fast first a huge snakehead erupted from his wand about a foot wide with green emerald eyes then the snake head made a slithering movement and the snake head's body started to slither out of his wand tip. Harry had expected a small snake four feet at most, he had no idea why his snake was this huge he didn't complain however. Snape gaped at him for a few seconds but soon regained his senses.

"Expelliarmus" Snape cried, Harry who had a heavy snake uncoiling it self from the tip of his wand had no chance of moving quick enough to dodge the spell. He was trapped, the disarming spell approach him quickly it would hit him. Harry stood up to take it squarely in his chest the impact can be a bit painful otherwise especially as Snape is a powerful wizard. As the curse was about to hit him there was a bright flash and a loud pop. Harry had completely forgotten that he had created a shield against expelliarmus at the begging of the duel.

Snape glared at him and made to cast a second spell at Harry but before Snape had time to move the weight in the tip of Harry's wand suddenly subsided. Harry looked down on the floor a huge black

snake probably twenty feet long with green eyes and white belly was uncoiling it self there.

“Master what do you command” The huge snake hissed at him.

“Stay away from curses that my opponent might cast at you” Harry commanded he had had no idea that the snakes he conjured would address him as master.

Snape tried to stun the snake almost at once but the huge snake was very fast and slithered its body out of the way. Harry gained the upside of the duel in an instant Snape now had two opponents to watch.

“When I say now, attack him but don’t bite him” Harry hissed, he decided to make the process short with Snape since he was aching all over from exhaustion. The Reaktus charm was very draining when used for a longer period.

“Now” Harry hissed and the snake seemed to almost fly towards Snape. Snape turned to the snake to try to ward it off which gave Harry a free shot at Snape.

“Petrificus Totalus” Harry hissed in parseltongue by mistake, but the curse worked just as well as always. Snape fell to the floor unable to move a muscle. The snake however didn’t take this as a sign to stop its attack. Within seconds, the snake had Snape wrapped tightly in its long body.

“Good job” Harry hissed at the snake “Now let him go, and get back to me”

“Thank you master. As you wish master” The snake said and let Snape go. Snape fell to the floor unable to do a single thing to prevent it. Wish you could see this Sirius Harry though happily, or maybe not you wouldn’t be able to stop laughing for ages.

“Bravo” Tonks exclaimed, and there was a rumble of applaude and cheers from the audience. Harry looked around at them and smiled proudly, Neville was cheering like mad and many other Gryffindors

with him. Hermione was skipping up and down in relief and joy, Ron was standing next to her mouthing “party!”

“Master” The snake hissed fearfully “do we attack?”

“No” Harry hissed back.

“Please stop clapping” Harry said to the audience “You are scaring the snake”

The clapping stopped at once most peoples seemed afraid of the snake and didn’t like the idea of scaring it.

“Master must be a very powerful wizard to have so many servants” The snake hissed respectfully.

They should have a snake instead of a centaur at the fountain of magical brotherhood Harry thought.

“They are not my servants” Harry hissed.

“I’m sorry master but they obeys master, surly they are your servants” The snake hissed.

Harry was too exhausted from the duel to argue back at a snake instead he simply smiled at it hoping it would be enough like a human to understand his gesture.

“Miss Granger” Harry said tiredly “Would you mind teaching the Reaktus charm instead of me I think I need to lay down for a moment”

“Dinner will be served in five minutes” Hermione replied.

“Oh” Harry said he and Snape must have dueled for about four hours and all that time he had been under the influence of the Reaktus charm, which probably had made those four hours seem as eight to his body “We’ll have to do the Reaktus charm next week then”

Fleur lifted the body bind curse off Snape who seemed as tired as Harry was and didn’t have the slightest energy to even glare at Harry. Snape left the great hall almost as fast as Harry did.

Tonks and Fleur were left alone to return the great hall to its usual state. The Snake would eventually fade away since it was not a conjured snake just a charmed one but as nobody knew how long time that might take they decided to let it out in the forbidden forest rather than to vanish it.

"And when he cast that explosion I thought you were a gonner" Ron said eagerly discussing every detail of the duel.

"I was so worried" Hermione said "I almost poured water on you"

"And when you conjured that Snake" Ron said admiringly "I had no idea you could conjure snakes like that"

"That was fantastic, did you use Serpensortia?" Hermione asked, eager for the technical details.

"Yes" Harry said weakly.

"But you just started to hiss?" Ron asked.

"Harry, must have said Serpensortia in parseltongue" Hermione explained "That would explain why the snake got so huge"

Ron laughed "Can you imagine how Snape must feel, beaten by a Gryffindor who conjured a snake. I mean he's the head of the snake house"

Harry laugh feebly, but soon stopped "I got to be in his class Thursday morning!"

"Are you mad, don't go near him ever again" Ron said seriously "He's crazy he'll kill you if you walk through the door to his classroom"

"Don't be stupid he won't kill you Harry, he's a professor" Hermione said as they reached the fat Lady and gave the password.

Harry was too tired to have any further discussion about anything.

"I'm going to bed don't wake me up, no matter what" He told them and walked swiftly up to his dormitory.

Harry was more of a hero than he had ever been before, he had beaten Snape and Malfoy, the two most hated persons in the school, except perhaps Mr Fitch and his cat, and not only had he beaten them he had done it in front of everyone. Of course, the Slytherins hated him more than ever but Harry didn't complain especially as Draco Malfoy had started to ignore him completely.

Harry was very relieved Thursday morning in potions, that Snape was not at all as nasty as he could be. Snape ignored Harry as completely as Malfoy did, though Harry could tell that it took Snape all his will strength to do so.

The weeks progress quickly with both Quidditch practise and the dueling club. Soon the last traces of the summer were gone and the weather became colder for every day that passed. Harry was very happy everything was going his way for once the only thing bothering him was that Voldemort was out there but he had such a good time in Hogwarts with his friends that not even Voldemort could bother him too much.

Selena Malfoy seemed to find her place in Gryffindor and got several first year friends, she even dared to speak to Harry openly in Gryffindor tower. Harry was very happy for Selena, she seemed like a completely new person, she was open and nice and didn't seem to care whether her friends were muggle-borns, half-bloods or pure-bloods the slightest. She turned out to be a good chaser too, even though Ginny and Selena was not as good as Alicia and Angelina had been they still had a very good chance to win the cup this year again.

Ginny was in a very strange mood one moment she would be just as normal and at the next she would give someone a detention for something complete irrelevant. They were all very worried about Ginny but as she didn't seem to be in any sort of danger whatsoever they settled with Fleur's explanation that Ginny was just having a hard time growing up and that her hormones wasn't helping.

Voldemort was as horrible as ever, there were mystical disappearances and deaths. Sometimes though there were even small battles between aurors and death eaters. So far about a

hundred wizards had been murdered which Remus wrote in his letters was better than they could have dreamed for. Remus also explained in his letters that Voldemort was currently the underdog and would not endanger his death eaters in battles unless it was unavoidable. Muggle baiting and torture was out of the question.

Harry had finally gotten over Hedwig enough to start sending letters with school owls, he had felt like he was cheating on her when he sent his replies to Remus off with another owl but it couldn't be helped. Tonks and he also wrote a letter to Mrs Figg telling her about the dueling club they had started and many other more or less insignificant things. Mrs Figg unlike Mr Filch wasn't bitter at all about being a squib, so Harry nor Tonks felt bad about telling her how wonderful it was to be back at Hogwarts.

Earlier than Harry had thought Flitwick announced during one charm lesson, that those who had signed up for the field trip with to St Mungo's would take a portkey from the hospital wing at once. Hermione and most of the other students as well including all the Slytherins got up and left. Harry knew that none of the Slytherins had any interest at all in becoming healers they only went along on the trip because Harry was not. Flitwick gave up on the idea of teaching them anything since most of the students was not present instead they had a very good time accio dueling. The general idea of accio dueling was that to persons stood up in front of each other and tried to summon the same object whoever got the object won.

"Professor Flitwick" Harry asked at the end of the class when he and Ron were the only students left.

"ah, Potter what can I do for you?" Flitwick asked happily in his somewhat squeaky voice.

"Well it is Hermione" Answered Ron who was standing next to Harry
"It's her birthday soon"

"Oh, congratulate her from me, which day is it?" Flitwick said happily.

"The nineteenth" Harry said "We were thinking of giving her a book"

“Yeah” Ron chipped in “we figured we would give her a book on enchanting objects”

“And you wonder which to choose” Flitwick finished for them “That’s tricky I would say Enchanting for pleasure and profit by Porter Petretti but I think Miss Granger would like Final charms and enchantments by Callandra Delvalle better. She is not as good a writer as Mr Petretti but her book contains more charms and techniques then Enchanting for pleasure and profit”

“That would be it” Ron said happily as they left the charms classroom “Hermione loves a book especially if it is hard read, maybe we should ask for it in some old dead language she would love it”

Harry had suggested that they would buy Hermione a book for her birthday since she wouldn’t let Harry read Dueling for masters alone. Ron didn’t think a book was a good thing at first since he thought Hermione read all to much as it was but he had given in when Harry had told him that Hermione wouldn’t be really happy unless she got a book and that she would be very grateful if she got one.

They ordered the book by post owls from flourish and blots and it arrived the day before Hermione’s 16th birthday the 18th of September. They celebrated Hermione’s birthday with a small part down at Hagrid’s hut as usual. Dobby had arranged with the birthday cake and Ron had persuaded him to eat it with them. Hermione was very happy about this, one house elf was better then none. Hermione loved her charms book, it was a thick book, the cover was of dark thick leather and it had almost as many charms on it as Harry’s Dueling for masters.

Just when things started settling down to daily routine at Hogwarts, it was Halloween and the first Hogsmeade visit. Ron and Hermione made plans for the trip to the village, Harry felt a bit sad being left out at first but then Fleur asked him to go with her. Tonks pretended to be mad at them for leaving her alone and said that she could get any date she wanted and she did. Harry had no idea of how she managed it but some how she had persuaded Selena Malfoy to go with her, apparently first years were allowed to go if they were in the company of a professor.

Harry had a great day in Hogsmeade with Fleur they had started the trip by sneaking out through the hidden passage under the Whomping willow covered by Harry's invisibility cloak. He had told Fleur about how Remus had spent the full moon's in the shrieking shack and how his dad, Sirius and Wormtail had become animagi and she was very eager to see the actual places Harry had described.

They went everywhere in Hogsmeade, Fleur stopped by the post office to send a post card to her aunt Nancy in Beauxbaton. Harry noticed a new section of owls called 'security owls'. A sign explained that the security owls were trained to fly at a very high altitude and not land in mid flight. They also wore a seal that proved that they were ministry approved security owls. Harry knew however that Mad Eye Moody thought these owls to be some kind of joke and was not even reliable enough to trust with a simple greeting.

Harry and Fleur wandered further in Hogsmeade towards Honeydukes. She had told him once during one of her long crying sessions that she had bought Gabrielle's ninth birthday present there so Harry was a little nervous how she would react. When they entered the sweet shop, Fleur didn't seem to even think about Gabrielle to Harry's relief but it wasn't really surprisingly Fleur had been a lot happier lately. Tonks and Selena were standing by the counter waiting in line to purchase something but then Harry saw they weren't holding any sweets. Tonks was glancing over the counter and down the stairs that led to the storeroom in which the secret passage to Hogwarts was.

"Accio Map" Fleur hissed angrily, she had no doubt realised where Tonks was watching and why. The Marauders' Map flew out of one of the pockets on Tonks's cloak to Fleur who caught it.

"What?" Tonks asked and turned around facing them as Fleur handed Harry the map and forbade him giving it back to Tonks.

"You know very well what" Fleur replied silently so that no students would over hear their conversation "And no, under all circumstances no"

"I wasn't planning...." Tonks said.

"You were too" Fleur hissed "I absolutely forbid it, especially as you are in the company of Miss Malfoy"

Selena looked questionably at Harry and Harry smiled reassuringly at her though Harry knew that if Tonks replied the wrong thing there would be a bird in Honeydukes.

"I'm sorry" Tonks replied who finally seemed to know better then to push Fleur's anger. "I won't do it, I just wondered"

"Good" Fleur replied shortly "then we won't have a problem"

"No we won't" Tonks agreed weakly.

Saline continued looking questionably around at them as if hoping that some one would give her an explanation. Harry didn't dare tell her anything in Fleur's presence.

After the minor incident Harry, Fleur, Tonks and Selena had a very good time looking at the sweets in the unusual taste section. Harry joked with Fleur about buying Worm Whippings for her next veela transformation.

Later that evening they gathered in the great hall for the Halloween feast. The great hall was as magnificent as ever; it was enchanted so that it resembled a graveyard, or perhaps maybe more a grave dungeon. Great drops of red liquid dropped from the ceiling that for once didn't reflect the sky outside. Hundreds of live flying bats seemed to be able to catch each one of these drops before they landed. Harry supposed that the drops were enchanted so that they would conjure a bat if needed to catch them or perhaps it was the other way around the bats conjured a drop and then caught it or perhaps the hole thing was an illusion of some kind.

Harry had a great time eating all kinds of food that were enchanted to look nasty but tasted great. It became a sort of a dare at the Gryffindor table to taste the most awful looking things it was a bit like eating Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans.

"I'm full" Ron exclaimed leaning back in his chair.

"Me too" Agreed Harry and lent back in his chair as well.

"Listen mate" Ron said and Hermione who sat across the table to Ron, glanced at Harry apologetically "You wouldn't mind..."

"Could you borrow us your cloak?" Hermione asked quickly "You'll have it back tomorrow."

"You two are prefects!" Harry said disapprovingly he couldn't help himself it was a too good opportunity.

Hermione blushed and looked down on her plate.

Ron however didn't seem even slightly abashed "So what no one would see us if we wore the cloak"

"Sure" Harry replied though it would be somewhat lonely without them but maybe he could go see Fleur and Tonks.

The trio left a few minutes later and walked up towards Gryffindor tower before everyone.

"See you tomorrow" Ron said when Harry handed him his cloak.

Harry sat alone on his bed he glanced up at his foe glass and saw to his surprise that some of the dark shadows were moving swiftly in the background. Shadows in the background usually moved a little and sometimes even swiftly though not as many as now. Harry sighted deeply he wasn't worried about what the foe glass showed him unless he could see actual faces, but it made him feel uneasy nevertheless.

He tried to focus on something else and settled on Ron and Hermione. He sometimes wondered where they went when they were alone he supposed they like most couples found an empty classroom somewhere to be alone. With a deep yawn, he slumped back on his bed and felt that he still had the Marauders' map in his robe pocketed.

"That's it" He mumbled to himself and sat up, he pulled his map out of his pocket and tapped it with his wand and gave it the password. The lines that made up the Hogwarts castle drew themselves quickly.

The first thing that caught Harry's eye was a dot moving rapidly away from the others in Hogwarts. As the lines drew themselves more clearly, he noticed that the dot that moved quickly away was in the forbidden forest and then he saw to his horror that it was labelled Selena Malfoy.

Harry knew at once that Selena could not possibly be running that fast by herself through the forbidden forest, much less in the dark and since her dot was alone some kind of horrible unnamed creature must have taken her. Harry's heartbeat doubled in an instance but he didn't notice, he knew what he had to do. He pulled out his wand and summoned his Firebolt violently from his trunk, and mounted it. He turned towards the window it would have to go.

"REDUCTO" Harry yelled waving his wand at the window it was blasted to pieces and a small part of the wall with it. Harry flew quickly out into the dark night pushing his broom to fly as fast as it ever had. He knew he shouldn't leave the castle like this, but what choice did he have when Selena could be eaten this very moment by some horrific beast?

Harry bent even lower over his handle to fly even faster, his broom made a sort of whistling sound, he had never flown this fast ever in his life. He flew over the forbidden forest where he had seen Selena's spot before but he couldn't see or hear anything. He flew deeper over the forest staying above the treetops.

"Lumos" He muttered hoping that he would be able to see something.

"SELENA" He yelled and flew deeper into the forest. Perhaps Harry thought desperately there were no more a Selena to be found.

"SELENA!" He yelled frantically.

"Help" He heard a weak voice call from far ahead. Harry sped up again and flew towards the help. He took several breaths of deep relief at least she was not too badly hurt to yell for help. There was a clearing ahead and then he saw something that would cause Ron to fall off his broom. There was about ten huge Acromantulas fighting over something small and blond that was screaming and sobbing loudly.

"Harry" Selena wailed painfully, she was dangling violently in her legs from one of the giant spiders who were trying to ward off the rest of the giant spiders with its front set of legs.

"Don't let them eat me, oh god Harry don't let them eat me I don't want to die" Selena wailed through her sobs. The spiders stopped fighting and turned up towards the sky where Harry was hovering on his broom.

"Let her go" Harry said firmly, he felt himself shake with anger and horror. He had no idea how he would get Selena out of this but he would do anything to do so.

"Be gone friend of Hagrid" One of the spiders said and the others clicked their pincers in agreement. Harry had not counted on being recognized and was a little taken aback.

"Harry" Wailed Selena as the spiders started to fight over her again.

"Stop it" Harry yelled.

"You have nothing to say in this matter friend of Hagrid" One of the spiders clicked.

"LET HER GO OR I'LL KILL YOU" Harry threatened. The spiders ignored him completely they were too busy fighting, Selena dangled madly and sobbed loudly as the spider who held her reared on two pairs of legs.

There was no chance he was going to be able to stun any of them alone, the only curse he knew that could affect the Acromantulas was the killing curse. Harry made up his mind in an instance he would at least have to try the killing curse, Avada Kedavra. He pointed his wand at one of the attacking spiders as he didn't dare point his wand at the spider that held Selena since he might accidentally hit her.

Harry brought up the memories and feelings he had of the killing curse and focused as hard as he possibly could on feeling dead and emotionless, he imagined the green flash and the sound of speeding death.

“AVADA KEDAVRA” Harry yelled as loud as possible. He had read that the killing curse was emotional demanding and that it should not be practised under any circumstances without a certified curse trainer but he had never in his wildest dreams imagined anything like this. As he yelled the last syllables of the killing curse he was sure he was going to die, he felt the green light leave his wand but it was not only green light he felt most of himself somehow leave as well. It wasn't hurting physically in any way but he could feel pain in his mind as badly as if someone had poked a needle into his brain.

Years of Quidditch practise made Harry instinctively hang on to his broom. Reality started blurred, and Harry hardly saw the killing curse hit the spider he was aiming for. The huge spider rolled over and laid still not even a shiver, the spider was dead.

Harry had killed it. He had killed a creature capable of human speech and with enough brains to remember him since his second year. He had committed murder.

The spiders stopped fighting for a moment and looked up at Harry, Selena still sobbed and screamed for help. Harry hoped for a few moments that the spider was going to let Selena go since Harry had proven that he would kill them but they didn't let Selena go instead the other spiders seemed to think that now they had better odds of eating Selena themselves since they had one less opponent.

Harry didn't feel like he could survive casting another curse, in fact he didn't feel like he could even make his heart beat even if it did it by itself.

“HAARRRY” Saline screamed “It's going to eat me, I am going to die!”

An attacking spider was trying to catch Selena's head or her waving arms. Harry knew that if the attacking spider managed to catch Selena's arms and started to pull they would tear her apart. He knew that the only way Selena was going to survive this was if he murdered the attacking spider. With huge effort, Harry managed to pull his mind and will together.

“AVADA KEDAVRA” Harry yelled again and he died he just had to be dead. All his emotions vanished and he felt light and strong as if he was drifting off towards heaven but found after a few moments that he was still inside his body. Selena screamed in pain as the remaining spiders started to fight even more violently over her.

“Avada Kedavra” Harry hissed and a third spider fell to the ground, he didn’t feel anything now that he performed the curse but somehow he had not expected to feel anything it was almost as if he was dreaming. More spiders were welling out of the forest into the clearing they had probably heard Selena or Harry yelling.

“Avada Kedavra” Harry said over and over again and one after one the spiders fell to the ground. Soon the spiders started to flee but Harry wouldn’t let them, they had tried to hurt Selena and they were going to pay dearly with their lives. He flew quickly back and forward in the clearing casting killing curses everywhere.

He felt nothing but satisfaction and power, he knew that he should feel horrible but he didn’t. Finally, the only spider left was the one holding Selena, it dropped her and started to run but Harry didn’t let it he flew around it and faced it.

“Say goodbye spider of Aragog” Harry said in a deadly whisper.

“No” The spider clicked “Don’t kill me friend of Hagrid” It pleaded.

“Avada Kedavra” Harry said with an evil smirk, the spider fell dead to the ground.

“Is it gone” Selena asked from the middle of the clearing, she was beyond tears now probably in some kind of shock. Harry flew over to her, and helped her up on his broom without saying a word.

“Harry” She said loosening up a little “I am so sorry I didn’t know”

Harry didn’t reply he found that some part of him must have died back in the clearing because he didn’t feel a single thing, his emotions was completely gone. He didn’t feel like talking to a first year that had nothing to offer him. As they reached Hogwarts grounds Harry realise that he must have gone mad though he didn’t feel bad about it. He

couldn't feel anything, all that was left in him was his will. Harry landed near the forest and got off the broom he didn't want to talk to McGonagall or any other stupid teacher at the moment.

"Fly strait to McGonagall" Harry said coolly to get rid of her, he could now see that Selena was crying silently but didn't care "her office is on the first floor"

Selena cried even more as she got up on Harry's Firebolt and flew away towards the castle. She probably expects to be expelled Harry thought, and be forced to go back to her parents. Harry should have told her that she wouldn't be expelled, but thought savagely that she could do with some crying it wouldn't hurting her and if it did it wasn't Harry's trouble.

Harry walked slowly towards the castle in lack of anything better to do. The doors to the castle flung open far away, someone walked out of the castle and closed them. Harry stopped he couldn't make out who it was because the bright light from inside the castle had blinded him slightly. The figure who had exited the school walked strait towards him. It was Snape Harry realised when the figure was only ten feet away.

"Potter" Snape hissed "Miss Malfoy tells us you were inside the forest"

"Good for you Snivellus" Harry said coolly, he wasn't angry at Snape he just knew Snape had done him wrong and would pay for it "Or is it Professor Snivellus"

"Detention for the rest of the term Potter" Snape hissed and turned almost as white as Voldemort.

"You might be able to give much more then detention" Harry told him softly.

"What have you done Potter" Snape spat.

"I've just killed about twenty Acromantulas" Harry replied without the smallest hint of a emotion "but that's not why"

"Out with it!" Snape commanded Harry could tell that Snape didn't believe for a moment that Harry had killed twenty Acromantulas it was too far fetched.

"I'm going to fry your brain" Harry explained calmly "And unless you end up with the Longbottoms, I think you will have a chance to expel me for use of an unforgivable on a professor... Snivellus"

Snape went as if in slow motion for his wand but before Snape had even gripped his wand in his pocket Harry had drawn his wand and pointed it straight between Snape's eyes. His lack of emotions seemed to have boosted his reflexes almost as if he had used Reaktus.

"Let's find out how long you can take it shall we" Harry whispered. Snape's eyes had gone wide with shock and terror Harry could tell from Snape's expression that he had experienced the cruciatus curse before. Harry smiled a little voice somewhere in his head told him that he was insane to even consider using an unforgivable against a teacher but he couldn't care less.

"Crucio" Harry said almost lazily. Snape didn't have a chance of dodging the curse they were standing too close to each other.

Snape let out a horrible howl of pain as the cruciatus curse hit him straight between his eyes. Snape fell to the muddy ground screaming at the top of his lungs shaking and twitching madly in pure pain.

To Harry it was wonderful it felt a bit like flying on his broom, he closed his eyes to enjoy Snape's shrieks of pain more fully. It wasn't really a feeling just a desire for revenge.

After a few minutes, Harry found that he could control Snape's screams by pointing his wand at different parts of Snape. He opened his eyes and saw that Snape didn't have far left to go, he had bitten his tongue off or perhaps his lungs or throat had been damaged by his screams because he was bleeding freely from his mouth. With a quick flick with his wand over one of Snape's legs he managed to get the potion master to roll over to his front. A smirk crossed Harry's lips when he realised that Snape would with some luck drown in his own blood and mud.

“STUPIFY” Shrieked a terrified female voice, Harry had been too caught with Snape to notice anyone approaching him. On instinct, Harry ducked and let Snape out of the cruciatus curse involuntarily. The stunner passed inches over Harry’s head. Whoever disturbed his torment of Snape was going to pay. He turned around and found McGonagall pointing her wand at him.

“What are you doing Potter” McGonagall shrieked, she was trembling so badly that she would have problems cursing him if she tried.

“I was frying Professor Snivellus’s brain” Harry replied daringly raising his wand at her “I think it would do him good to spend some time with the Longbottoms”

“Put down your wand at once Potter” McGonagall commanded.

“You actually think I would do that” Harry replied in a patronizing voice.

“Very well” McGonagall said fear etched in her face “But I want you to know that Fleur is in St Mungo’s”

He found that Fleur was perhaps the last thing he had feelings for in this world. As he realised he loved Fleur as much as ever he felt as if someone one was stabbing his brain with a needle again trying literary to piercing his feelings for Fleur so that they would go away. No matter how deep or much the needle pierced his mind the feelings for Fleur would not go away, he loved her with every part of his mind.

Harry burst out laughing and crying madly “I love Fleur” He yelled in triumph and fell limp down in the mud, his mind too damage to keep him conscious.

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Wow action! No explosions though... I'll make up for that in the end... lol

I sincerely hope you don't hate me for giving Snape a hard time.

**Please oh please Review!**

## Chapter 21 Madness

Harry felt stiff, he tried to push himself to sitting position but couldn't move his arms they were bond to his sides by something. He opened his eyes his glasses were gone though he didn't need them to see that he was in a brightly lighted room with one bed in. He lifted his head and glanced down his body. He was laying flat on his back in the bed and saw that there were numerous white straps tying him tightly to the bed. He felt his anger flare insanity.

"LET ME OUT!" He yelled in the empty room hoping that someone would hear him "I'M NOT INSANE! I WANT FLEUR! LET ME OUT! NOW!" he continued screaming for few minutes until a nurse opened the door and entered.

"Mr Potter?" She asked carefully.

Harry didn't want to reply or even acknowledge her presence so he stared up at the white ceiling ignoring her completely.

"Would you like to eat some lunch?" The nurse asked, carefully approaching him.

"Like I would eat anything you gave me," Harry snarled, "I don't trust you, I don't trust anyone!"

"I assure you Mr Potter we have a very high security here at St Mungo's." The Nurse said and pulled a little cart with food into the room, "You promised me at breakfast that you wouldn't argue again."

"I never had breakfast." Harry spat "Do you think I'm stupid?"

"No" The Nurse replied, "Just a little stressed"

"Where is Dumbledore?" Harry asked forcefully "Has he snapped my wand yet?"

"No, I told you... don't you remember?" The nurse asked gently.

"I remember cursing Snape." Harry replied and felt a rush of happiness. He smiled widely as he remembered Snape laying face down in the mud shaking madly.

"Did I do it, has he lost his mind?" He asked hopefully.

"Mr Potter surly you really don't want Professor Snape to lose his mind?" The nurse asked smiling as if knowing better than him.

"That's my business" Harry snapped, "He is here isn't he?"

"Snivellus, can you hear me?" Harry called before the nurse had time to answer, "Mr Potter sends his hello!"

"Professor Snape can not hear you through these walls." The nurse explained gently.

"So he is really here, did I manage?"

"Yes, unfortunately he is here and no luckily professor Snape will be able to return to Hogwarts in a couple of days, perhaps a week"

"Hear that Snivellus?" Harry yelled even though the nurse had said that Snape couldn't "But don't worry, next time I'll make sure you end up with the Longbottoms.

"Mr Potter," the Nurse said firmly "We will not be able to let you out of here unless you can control your desires to curse people.

"I can control my desires." Harry snarled "I didn't curse McGonagall or Selena, did I?"

"That is very good, Mr Potter hopefully in a few weeks you will be able to move to a half open ward." The Nurse said approvingly.

"Fleur will come and get me!" Harry said angrily "She won't let me stay here!"

"Unfortunately Fleur has not woken up yet"

“What have you done to her?” Harry asked, he vaguely remembered McGonagall telling him that Fleur was ill. He now blamed the nurse for it.

“I have done nothing to Miss Delacour.” The Nurse said softly ignoring his unfair accusation “She fainted on her way to her office in Hogwarts last night.”

Harry smiled he remembered Fleur telling him in Grimmauld Place that she had fainted once before on Halloween.

“May I ask why you are smiling?” The nurse asked and pushed a fork with some kind of meat into his mouth, Harry who had forgotten completely that he had said that he was not going to eat anything ate the food happily.

“She has fainted once before on Halloween,” Harry said “when she was little, and I said that...”

Harry started to cry abruptly, “She will be okay won’t she? Promise me she will” Harry sobbed miserably.

“She will probably wake up at any moment.” The Nurse said soothingly and fed him a piece of potato. Harry didn’t say anything for the rest of the meal.

“I’ll see you in a few hours” The Nurse called, Harry didn’t reply but the Nurse didn’t seem to have expected a reply because she quickly closed the door.

“Harry,” A soft voice woke him he had fallen asleep a few minutes after the nurse had left him, “Wake up Harry.”

Harry opened his eyes and saw Dumbledore leaning over him Ron and Hermione close behind, watching him nervously.

“What happened?” Ron asked seriously when he saw that Harry had opened his eyes. Hermione gave the straps that tied him a swift glance as Harry tried to pull loose.



“GET THEM OFF ME!” Harry yelled angrily when he realised that he couldn’t even move an inch. Ron and Hermione jumped at his sudden outburst and gave each other a horror-struck look. Then as sudden as his outburst Harry started laughing.

“I nearly did it Ron, he’s in here with me.” Harry said happily “Did you a favour Professor Dumbledore, let me lose and I’ll finish it!”

Hermione gasped and Ron shuttered, Dumbledore however did not seem to notice his words.

“Harry” Dumbledore said gravely, “You have used a very powerful and dark curse so many times that it has robbed you temporarily of your sanity.”

“Nope” Harry disagreed carelessly oblivious to Dumbledore’s penetrating gaze “You are just saying that so that I won’t have to go to Azkaban for murder and use of the cruciatus curse”

Dumbledore sighed heavily “Very well Harry”

“That’s not true!” Hermione burst out “Harry you got a serious case of Spell exhaustion and Spell shock”

Harry stared at her not understanding a word she said but soon snapped out of it “Hey Ron, can you imagine I got about twenty spiders!”

“T-that’s great.” Ron stammered uncertainly.

“Knew what the best part was?” Harry asked not waiting for an answer, “They recognized me! They called me friend of Hagrid It was so great the last one even pleaded for it’s life wish I had killed it more slowly now.”

“Oh” Said Ron too shocked to think of a better reply.

“Yeah and then Professor Snivellus turned up” Harry said dreamily with a huge smile across his face “Did you hear him scream? I never knew he could scream like that, especially when I aimed at his head, bet...”

Harry started to sob with out a warning for the second time that day  
“McGonagall said... Fleur!”

The three visitors looked at him carefully.

“GET ME OUT OF HERE!” Yelled Harry, furiously trying to escape his straps “We got to go and rescue Fleur they have taken her!”

“Who has taken her?” Hermione asked gently.

“Argh!” Harry said irritably “You are so stupid! The nurse of course, she has taken Fleur so that she won’t come and release me.”

“Harry” Dumbledore said, “Fleur has not been taken by anyone she is just unconscious, that is why she isn’t here.”

“Oh” Harry whispered as if Dumbledore just let him in on a big secret, “You are tricking them, very clever. Hear that Hermione you got to pretend at least or it won’t be credible.”

“Right” Hermione said tears building up in her eyes “don’t worry Harry it will all be okay.”

“Is that why I’m here Professor Dumbledore, I’m tricking him as well?” Said Harry eagerly “This is so great! Snivellus won’t know what hit him, he’ll be right up with the Longbottoms before he’ll even know what hit him.”

“What do you think Hermione?” Harry asked, “Think Malfoy will fall for it too?”

“Sure” Hermione replied glancing hopelessly over at Ron who glanced back at her with an equally hapless expression.

The Nurse that had served Harry lunch a few hours earlier entered the room with her food cart.

“That’s enough for today, it is time dinner,” The Nurse said softly.

“Oh” Dumbledore said looking down on his wizard watch “Yes indeed, time flies Isabella... see you in a couple of days Harry”

"Bye Harry" Hermione said forcing a smile.

"See you" Ron said.

"Yeah! And don't forget no matter what, we need to trick them!" Harry replied and his friends left his isolated room leaving him alone with the nurse.

"Trick them?" The nurse asked gently and begun feeding him as the door closed.

"Yes" Harry said completely serious "But I can't tell you or will never get Snape, he's tricky himself you see..."

"I can imagine" The Nurse said absentmindedly and stuffed some food into him.

"You got to watch out for him you know" Harry mumbled his mouth too full to speak clearly.

"Really?" The nurse asked mildly interested.

"Yeah stay away from him or he'll do horrible stuff." Harry said warningly.

"Like what" The nurse asked and fed him another mouthful.

"He might grease on you." Harry said grimly as if there was nothing more horrible in the world.

"Oh" The nurse said in face enthusiasm, "I'll keep that in mind... open up"

"I have a couple of potions I want you to take..." The nurse said uncertainly when he was full, "You will swallow them like good boy?"

"Why wouldn't I... they are not poison are they?" Harry asked narrowing his eyes suspiciously.

"No certainly not!" the Nurse said indignantly "One is a Memory Concoction and the other The Draught of Peace and if you want I have a mild sleep potion."

“Okay” Harry said thinking fast “We have to trick them so I’ll take the Memory Concoction and The Draught of Peace but I need to stay awake if Snape or Voldemort tries to get me.”

“Don’t say the name” The nurse hissed forgetting her professional manner completely.

“What are you a mudblood?” Harry asked not even reflecting over his use of the word ‘Mudblood’, “He doesn’t like mudbloods even if his dad was a muggle. He’s not a very decent wizard, killed both my parents, you know.”

“Weren’t your mother muggle-born?” The nurse asked.

“Yep” Harry replied happily and then contorted his face in anger “Snape called her a mudblood once”

“That was not nice of him” The Nurse said “Is that why you cursed him?”

“Not only” Harry replied grimly “He’s a greasy old git... haven’t you seen him?”

The nurse didn’t reply instead she poured the vial containing the draught of peace down his throat, a warm numbness spread through his body. Harry took a deep breath, his lounges seemed to fill much easier with air than usual and he felt very peaceful. The nurse smiled at him and poured the memory concoction down his throat.

“We’ll get him won’t we?” Harry asked triumphantly he knew Snape would fall for this.

“Rest now and I’ll serve you breakfast tomorrow. If we are lucky Fleur will wake up and visit you then” The Nurse said.

Harry didn’t reply he didn’t hear what the nurse had said, he was too busy picturing Snape screaming and shaking on the muddy ground. He didn’t even notice when the nurse left the room, a few hours later the lights went out and Harry fell asleep.

He dreamed of Fleur. He was standing next to her she was sleeping in a similar bed as his but without straps, next to the bed stood a table full of flowers and cards. Most of the cards were from male Hogwarts students but he also found one from Tonks, one from Ron and Hermione and finally a card in French from her aunt Nancy in Beauxbaton. Harry smiled sadly in his dream.

“Fleur” He whispered softly. It was strange he was his usual old self in his dream world, not insane at all.

“Fleur” He repeated more loudly when she didn’t notice him at all.

“Harry” She muttered sleepily, she stirred and suddenly her eyes opened.

“Harry” She said and again looking around in the room after him but she didn’t seem to be able to see him. She looked over at the table next to her bed and smiled as she saw all her cards and flowers. She sat up and started looking through them. Harry understood after a moment that she was looking after something from him.

“Fleur” He tried to say but he couldn’t make a sound, he tried to grab her but somehow he couldn’t, perhaps he thought this was not that kind of dream. The door to Fleur’s room opened, an old nurse Harry didn’t recognize entered.

“Miss Delacour I am so happy to see that you are finally awake.” The old nurse said.

Fleur didn’t seem aware of where she was or why she was there. She gave the nurse a very blank look.

“You fainted. You were on your way to your office.”

“Oh” Fleur replied as comprehension dawned on her “Where am I?”

The Nurse smiled “You gave madam Pomfrey quite a scare. Usually young witches such as yourself don’t drop down like that, she feared since you are part veela that she could not treat you properly. It was decided to send you here to St Mungo’s instead.”

"I see" Fleur said softly Harry could tell that she hated being reminded of being a veela "How long was I gone?"

"Almost thirty hours." The nurse said, "Have you any idea of why you lost consciousness?"

"No, I once passed out when I was four" Fleur said remembering her childhood but then she snapped back to reality and added "But I hit my head then..."

"Yes we saw that in your journal," The nurse stated.

"Has Harry been here?" Fleur asked abruptly.

"No I'm sorry but Mr Potter is currently... well he's not well he's down the corridor but Albus Dumbledore was here with a young boy with red hair and that girl who got all those Os... Granger I think"

"Harry's ill?" Fleur asked paling visibly.

"Yes I am afraid he is" The nurse said and Fleur stood up.

"Please lay down, you may feel all right but we still..." The Nurse said sternly but stopped abruptly as Fleur sprouted wings and feathers.

"Don't you dare tell me to lie down!" Fleur hissed, glaring dangerously at the old nurse who looked as if she might have a heart attack any second. Harry didn't want to dream about Fleur turning into a bird not because he didn't like to see her in her bird shape just because he knew Fleur didn't like it.

Harry opened his eyes and could feel his mind speeding up, his thoughts passed in his head so fast that he soon did not have any control of them, whatsoever. Before he knew it, he was screaming for someone to get him out of there so he could visit Fleur and send Snape away for good. After a few moments of violent screaming, he could hear people outside his door and he fell quiet.

"GIVE ME THAT KEY!" Fleur's voice yelled he could hear by the sound of it that she was in her bird shape.

“Please, it’s way after...” Someone replied desperately.

“NOW!” Fleur yelled. Perhaps his dream was true Harry thought for a fraction of a second before that thought flew out of his head to be replaced by a million others.

“Help! Security!” A scared voice yelled, “She stole my wand!”

“ALOHOMORA!” Fleur yelled and the door to Harry’s room burst open violently.

“Way to go Fleur,” Harry said happily “Let me lose so that we can go and finish Snape, he’s here too!” Fleur however didn’t seem to hear a word of what Harry was saying, she started to cry silently and dropped the stolen wand without noticing.

“Are you all right Harry?” Fleur asked uncertainly her feathers had faded away completely.

“Yes, but I’m stuck here.”

“Oh, Harry” Fleur sobbed and ran over to Harry’s side and hugged him through his blankets “It was just like Gabrielle... don’t you ever dare scare me like that again”

Harry looked at her with a blank face.

“I never told you” Fleur choked out and started to hyperventilate “but Gabrielle... she... su-survive-ed the a-a-at-tack... she d-d-died later t-that night I...” she sobbed gave a single hysterical sob “... I... was with her”

Harry didn’t know what to say, normally he would of course but now his focus slipped away from Fleur and to the fact that he was strapped tightly to his bed.

“Let me lose Fleur” Harry said, Fleur glanced at him disbelievingly she had obviously expected him to react in a different manner. She pulled her self together however and started loosen the straps.

“Hurry” Harry said, “I can’t wait to get Snape, he’s here too”

“Get Snape...” Fleur said “Why what has he done?”

“He’s a greasy old git”

“So...” Fleur said hesitantly looking up at him “How are you going to get Snape?”

“Like the last time before they got me, I’m going to fry his brain with crucio.” Harry said Fleur gaped at him in shock and horror.

“Don’t worry” Harry said totally misinterpreting her shocked face “It won’t be long, he won’t stand many minutes more, we can get out of here in a few minutes and get back to Hogwarts or Grimmauld place it’s closer”

“Harry, are you really... well?”

“Yepp” Harry said carelessly. Fleur looked down at his bindings and continued to loosen them. Soon Harry tore his right arm free and tried to sit up.

“Wingbeat?” Fleur asked uncertainly and cached his hand. Harry got a shock as of static electricity and gasped but he didn’t let go of Fleur’s hand. Instead, he squeezed it hard, Fleur did the same. Unlike normal static electricity, the shock was not over in a fraction of a second it continued for what felt forever. In the beginning it was horrible Harry was shaking madly as if thousands of volts passed through his body but then slowly a warm sensation spread in his body it was wonderful.

His speeding mad thoughts started to slow down and he was able to focus on Fleur, her eyes were wide in shock and perhaps pain. Harry was horrified what if he had hurt her? He tried to pull his hand loose but Fleur didn’t let go instead she flashed him a blindingly white smile. Harry smiled back, the initial pain and was completely gone and the wonderful warm feeling had spread entirely through his body and mind. He took a deep breath he was not insane anymore. He had of course not realised he had been insane before but now it all came back to him.



Harry realised that Fleur had somehow cured him, probably with her veela powers.

“What happened?” Fleur asked.

“It was so horrible” Harry whispered, and suddenly realised that he was a murderer and someone who almost had driven a professor insane.

“Tell me”

“I killed them all” Harry said quietly “One even pleaded for its life, but I killed it anyway”

Fleur’s eyes had gone wide “You killed someone”

“Yeah several” Harry said grimly “And then I tortured Professor Snape”

“With crucio?” Fleur asked disbelievingly looking over him as if she wasn’t sure she was dreaming “I don’t believe it you wouldn’t ever!”

“Perhaps, you should go and find Bill again because I’m going to be in Azkaban for a pretty long time”

The door burst open again and several male security guards entered, they were going to force Fleur back to her room and probably tie her down like Harry but then they saw Fleur’s sad tear streaked beautiful face.

“Ermh... you all right Miss?” One of the guards said awkwardly and drew himself up to look taller and more impressive.

“Yes” Fleur said and shook her beautiful head. The guards who had their wands drawn quickly pocketed them.

“Can we do anything, can I get you anything?” The guard who had spoken before said.

“Yes” Fleur said warmly “please leave”

"As you wish miss" The guard said, they turned and left the room. The door closed with a click, outside the nurse was yelling at the guards to do their jobs and return Fleur to her room but fortunately, the guards all refused.

"I should go and try to apologize to Snape before they come and get me to Azkaban." Harry said darkly. His future didn't look too bright but at least he knew he was guilty and felt that the only way he was ever going to be able to live with himself was if he was in prison where he belonged. He wondered what Lucius Malfoy and Dolores Umbridge would say when they saw him, then he wondered if Ron and Hermione would ever visit him after what he had done.

"I won't let them take you to Azkaban"

"I deserve Azkaban." Harry said shortly, once again trying to release Fleur's hand but she wouldn't let him.

"Let me go!"

"No I won't let you... ever"

Harry started to cry helplessly "Let go Fleur" He begged "You have no idea what I have done"

"Tell me from the beginning"

Harry continued to cry but managed to tell her how he had seen Selena disappear into the forest on his map and how he had followed her on his broom.

"Acromantulas?" Fleur sighed "I can't blame you for killing those especially as they had Selena"

"I enjoyed it! I enjoyed killing them with the curse that killed my mum and dad and they remembered me from my second year and that made everything even more wonderful, the last one tried to plead with me but I killed all the same"

“But you save her” Fleur said trying to make him see things from a brighter perspective “and the Acromantulas wouldn’t have let you live if you were in their position”

“Maybe” Harry said, but didn’t blame himself any less “And then we flew back to Hogwarts. I told Selena to go and see McGonagall”

“Go on” Fleur urged him when he didn’t continue.

“Snape must have met her or something because he walked out to the castle and walked straight up to me, he gave me detention and then I told him that if he didn’t go insane he would be able to expel me”

“Then you cursed him” Fleur stated.

“Yes” Harry replied his tears had now stopped flowing from his eyes, he hated himself more than he hated Voldemort and didn’t think he deserved to waste tears on himself. “And I enjoyed it as much as flying, I would have driven him completely insane if McGonagall hadn’t turned up and I was going to punish her for interrupting but then everything went black”

Fleur was silent.

“So you see I deserve Azkaban for life!”

Fleur was going to reply, no doubt to try to tell him that it was his fault even though it was when there was a knock on the door.

“Come in” Harry said before Fleur could say anything. He didn’t want her to make him feel better, he deserved to be miserable.

“Good evening” Albus Dumbledore said as he entered the room “I was told you had woken up Fleur and forced yourself into Mr Potter’s room”

“I’m sorry headmaster” Fleur said turning pink “but I warned you that I sometimes tend to lose my temper when you offered me the position.”

Dumbledore chuckled "Don't apologize for who you are especially as no harm was done."

Fleur looked very much as she wanted to argue but didn't. Dumbledore pierced Harry with his bright blue glaze.

"I see you are miraculously better as well, Harry"

Harry nodded.

"Am I correct in assuming that Fleur had anything to do with your fast recovery" Dumbledore asked his bright blue eyes twinkling.

"Yes" Harry replied "It was... well odd"

"I was untying him and grabbed hold of his hand and..."

"It hurt first and it was like thousands of volts" Harry tried to explain.

"Extraordinary" Dumbledore stated looking up at the white ceiling thoughtfully "how very extraordinary"

"Why is it extraordinary" Fleur and Harry chorused both of them apparently tired of Dumbledore's ability to give cryptic answers.

"I'm afraid I'll have to keep that to myself at the moment."

Harry wanted to be angry with Dumbledore for not telling him but he felt as if he didn't deserve to know anything after all he had done.

"I want Fleur to have everything I own except my broom I want Ginny to have it so that she can be the Gryffindor seeker. And I want Ron and Hermione to have my cloak... they can have the map too, if you don't mind Fleur?" Harry asked deciding to get the hard things over with "There won't need to be a trial I am guilty."

"There won't be any need to divide your belongings Harry," Dumbledore said seriously "Since Snape has kindly agreed not to prosecute you, and oddly enough Professor McGonagall can't remember anything from that particular night."

"That doesn't matter since I admit, Fudge won't have trouble sentencing me!" Harry said angrily.

"That's very noble of you Harry but I'm afraid it can not be permitted" Dumbledore said firmly.

"Don't make it any more difficult then it is!" Harry snapped, he took a deep breath and continued in a more calm voice "I tortured Professor Snape and I killed about twenty Acromantulas with unforgivables. How would I be able to forgive myself?"

"As to that" Dumbledore said pleasantly "you had a very severe case of spell shock, according to what Miss Malfoy told me you didn't have any choice but performing 'Avada Kedavra' numerous times and that is quite enough to make even the boldest Auror to lose his mind"

"I closed my eyes with pleasure when I heard Professor Snape scream" Harry said trying to provoke Dumbledore into sending him to Azkaban so that he could pay for his crimes.

"I find it very hard to believe that any court would find you guilty of deliberately cursing Professor Snape after what you had just done... though as you say Fudge would probably try"

"I am guilty." Harry said stubbornly.

"Yes in a way you are" Dumbledore said smiling gently "And in that very same way Severus Snape is just as guilty. You are both adults and at the same time, you do deliberately provoke each other. If it had been young Mr Weasley who found you instead you wouldn't have cursed him"

"I nev..." Harry begun he wanted to tell Dumbledore just how bad Snape had been behaving but as he had cursed him so badly he didn't really think that he had the right to say anything bad about Snape.

"Perhaps Severus have done more wrong then right and I do admit that the circumstances have not made it easy for you and Professor Snape but challenging him for a duel was not a very good way to

make new friends, especially not when you conjured that snake and used your Slytherin ability to win.”

“He deserved it!” Fleur said sticking up for Harry when he wouldn’t do it for himself.

“Oh, yes I even expect he would have found it very amusing had he been the head of Gryffindor instead” Dumbledore said chuckling at the thought of Snape as a Gryffindor “Still you do not afford to pick enemies in the own lines Harry”

“No sir, I’m sorry to cause trouble.” Harry said now determined to do anything to earn Snape’s forgiveness, perhaps Snape would forgive him if he allowed Snape to put the cruciatus curse on him. Snape would no doubt like to see him scream after all he done and said.

“That’s good Harry and thank you for saving my students once more. Now I must get back to my time turner” Dumbledore said and made for the door.

“Perhaps now would be a good time to try and make up with Snape. I expect you to receive a portkey early tomorrow morning to my office” Dumbledore said and left the room before Harry or Fleur could say anything.

“Do you think he meant right now?” Harry asked nervously “It’s the middle of the night he’ll probably kill me if I wake him up now, that is if we are even allowed.”

“We are allowed.” Fleur said and flashed him briefly with her veela powers “And if they don’t work, you are the-boy-who-lived.”

They left the room. Harry tried to adjust the thin white Hospital robes so that they would look better but to no use.

“Dumbledore suggested that I could see Professor Snape.” Harry told a nurse at the reception desk of the ward.

“Are you feeling better then, Mr Potter?” The nurse asked eyeing him carefully and performed some stars with her wand that shone green as they circled around his head.

“Yes” Harry stated though it was a lie. He felt as bad as when he was about to face his Horntail in his fourth year.

“You seem to be well enough Me Potter.” The nurse said and gave Fleur a very hostile glance as if Fleur under no circumstances would be allowed to accompany him. Harry grabbed Fleur’s hand to show the nurse that Fleur was going with him no matter what. He smiled innocently at the nurse hoping to play on his fame.

“Follow me then Mr Potter and Miss Delacour”

“From now on you are officially a veela.” Fleur whispered, the nurse was walking in front of them and would probably not listen to closely to what they said.

“Today in other words” Harry said grimly “I would have a bigger chance surviving fighting my horntail with a flammable feather duster then waking Snape in the dead of night”

“Was that an insult?” Fleur asked in mock anger.

“Well” Harry replied, “Your office is not exactly dusty is it?”

“You’re lucky you’re in hospital Potter” Fleur stated “Mention me having feathers one more time and I might show them before I flame you.”

“You don’t scare me veela!”

“Oh yeah” Fleur replied, “I happen to notice that you don’t have your wand to save you”

The nurse cleared her throat; she had stopped in front of a door and was watching their playful argument. Harry and Fleur blushed.

“Professor Severus Snape’s room” The nurse said and walked away.

“I think that perhaps you better go in alone.” Fleur said.

“Yes” Harry agreed, he didn’t want Snape to think that he needed Fleur there to apologize, that is if Snape would listen to him before executing him.

I figured Dumbledore wouldn’t be too hard on Harry since he saved Selena and wasn’t responsible for his actions when he cursed Snape.

Please review (even if the following chapter is already posted).

Now I'm off to bed night!



## Chapter 22 I am Sorry

Harry took a deep breath and knocked on the door.

“Enter,” said Snape’s voice after a second. Harry took another deep breath and opened the door. The room was light by a brightly burning candle that was placed on a bedside table. Next to the table was a bed in which Severus Snape was laying. Snape was propped up on pillows and was reading a huge book, no doubt about potions, and did not notice Harry entering.

Harry stood still for a moment gathering his courage, he wondered for a moment why Snape needed to be in this Hospital but at a closer look he found that Snape was trembling badly and would probably have problems walking.

“Professor Snape” Harry said softly, Snape’s head snapped up from his book. For a short moment, he looked surprised to see Harry.

“Potter,” hissed Snape.

“I came to apologize sir,” said Harry abruptly “For everything.”

Snape was quiet probably thanks to Dumbledore Harry figured. Harry took a deep breath wondering where to start he figured it was best to start from the beginning with his parents.

“First of all I would like to I apologize for some of the things that occurred between you and my parents. I don’t know everything that happened between you all but I’d like to apologize for them now since they are not able to...”

Snape stared at him

“Since Sirius is gone too I would like to say I’m sorry about his behaviour too, they all were very stupid and I don’t blame you for hating them I would too especially after the Shrieking Shack...”

Snape continued to stare at him.

Harry sighed and went on, "and I am sorry for sneaking into the restricted section in my first year... you might remember someone opening that screaming book?" Harry could tell by the look on Snape's face that he vaguely remembered "And I never thanked you for saving me from falling off my broom that year, I figure I owe you a life debt for that sir"

"Indeed," said Snape.

"Then in my second year I flipped that firecracker into that swelling solution, and I stole bicorn horn and the boomslang skin from your office." Technically Hermione had stolen them but Harry didn't want to bring her into this.

"I used those ingredients to make poly juice potion so that I could sneak into the Slytherin common room and find out whether Malfoy was the heir of Slytherin. I am sorry for that and I am sorry for costing you the order of Merlin in my third year. You were right I helped Sirius escape and about that Hogsmeade visit with Malfoy. You were right that night when that Mad-Eye accused you of always accusing me for everything. I was stuck in that trick step under my cloak. A house elf stole gillyweed from your office and gave me for the second task and I'm sorry for not telling you. I am sorry for being so stupid to falling into your private memories it was wrong of me and I should have known better and I'm sorry about that snake I know you could probably have gotten me if you weren't so noble and only used nice curses."

Harry took a deep breath he was thankful that Snape had not interrupted him, now only the hardest part remained. "I know you'll never forgive me for that curse Professor but I'm so sorry, I'll quit potions of course and if you like I won't tell anyone if you put it on me, the curse that is."

"I'm not a sadist Potter," Snape said angrily. Harry very much doubted that but wouldn't say anything under the circumstances.

"No, but perhaps... anyway I won't bother you again, if you want me to do anything whatsoever... I am in debt to you sir."

Snape looked at him in a completely new way. Harry couldn't really tell what Snape was thinking and it bothered him perhaps Snape was going to put the cruciatus curse on him after all.

"To begin repaying your debt," Snape said to Harry's surprise and relief, "I want to see the Chamber of secrets."

"Of course," Harry said happily, facing his memories of that place was a small price to pay if Snape could possibly start to forgive him, "Anything else?"

"Yes," said Snape enjoying Harry's position, "There is a rumour among... certain groups of people," Harry knew Snape was talking about death eaters, "that you are wand brother with the Dark Lord."

"Yes," Harry admitted, "And I would have been a Slytherin too, had I not known anything about the houses before I was sorted."

Snape looked at him unbelievably, "I asked the hat to place me in any house but Slytherin because Draco Malfoy and Vold... Tom Riddle were Slytherins"

Harry stood quiet waiting for Snape to ask another question but Snape seemed to be done for now.

"Thank you sir," Harry said and left the room quickly.

"What happened?" Fleur asked when Harry closed Snape's door behind him.

"I told him everything and he took it very well, he even asked me to take me down the chamber of secrets," Harry explained, "Or that is what I think happened I'm probably hallucinating or something."

"Why?"

"Because Snape is currently torturing me with the cruciatus curse," Harry explained.

"Mmm," Fleur said sweetly, "You are lucky then to hallucinate about me."

Harry knew that he was supposed to say something to annoy Fleur but at the moment he didn't feel like it.

"Yes," Harry agreed instead, "very lucky."

They walked hand in hand back to Harry's room where they fell asleep on his bed close together.

"Mr Potter?!" The Nurse who used to feed him shrieked when she saw that he was not tied down and had Fleur sleeping next to him.

"What?" Harry asked sleepily and opened his eyes, he wanted to sleep for many hours more with Fleur but it couldn't be helped.

"Why are you not tied down properly and is that Miss Delacour? How did she get in here?" The nurse asked. The nurse from the night shift had obviously not been in contact with this nurse.

"I walked," replied Fleur, grumpily she hated to be woken like this.

"I must insist that you get back to your room at once Miss Delacour!" The Nurse commanded her sweetness that she had shown when Harry was insane completely gone, "And you Mr Potter stay calm or I'll have to pacify you."

Fleur snorted angrily and decided to ignore the nurse. She flung her arm around Harry, pulled him indecently close and closed her eyes trying to get back to sleep. Harry's cheeks burned badly, he was not as comfortable as Fleur with this kind of open affection. Fleur's tactic seemed to work however because the nurse turned and left, she locked the room on her way out. Harry drifted into sleep with Fleur for a few minutes before the door opened again.

"Mr Potter, Miss Fleur," Someone called, it didn't sound as any of the nurses that Harry had met before.

"Go away," groaned Fleur, too exhausted to care about anything except her sleep.

"We have taken the liberty of packing your things, and we have a port key ready for you," The someone said, Fleur stirred and seemed to

remember that they were supposed to take a port key to Dumbledore's office.

"Give us a minute," Harry asked and the door closed with a click.

"When I get to my office I'm going to sleep for a year," Fleur stated.

"Yeah," Harry agreed in a yawn.

They slowly got out of bed, Fleur was very pale and for once something about her appearance was not perfect she had bags under her eyes.

"What are you looking at?" Fleur snapped.

"You have bags under your eyes," Harry stated.

"You're joking," asked Fleur yawning involuntarily.

"No," Harry replied, "Guess I better find a new girlfriend then without b..."

"Shut up!" Fleur snapped, "Are you sure, it's not just the light or something?"

"Have you ever been not perfect in any light?" Harry retorted.

"Where is a mirror when you actually need one?" Fleur said, with a little smile. Harry knew that it meant very much for Fleur to not have a perfect face for once even if she still easily was the most beautiful girl at Hogwarts. Harry knew it made her feel more human and less veela.

"I'm so very happy for you Fleur," Harry teased.

"Didn't I tell you to shut up?" Fleur asked smiling widely.

"Must have slipped my mind," Harry replied innocently, "Besides why would I listen to a girl who has bags under her eyes?"

"Right," Fleur muttered to herself, "I should have remembered that nothing can shut up the bigheaded boy-who-lived."

Harry glared at her but Fleur just smiled at him. They both found that who ever had woken them up the second time had brought their clothes, and after a little bickering, they both turned their backs on each other and dressed. A few minutes later, there was a knock on the door and a man in his late fifties entered he wore white robes and reminded Harry a bit of a muggle Doctor.

"How nice to see that you are both awake," The man said kindly. It was the same man who had brought their clothes Harry realised at the sound of his voice.

"Albus asked me to make sure you got his office safely," The man said, Harry recognized him as an order of the phoenix member or at least he thought so he was not entirely sure, there were many order members.

"Oh," Fleur said in a way that made it clear to Harry that this was indeed a member of the order, "how nice of you."

The man gave Fleur a little smile, "Now grab hold of your bag and hold on to this," The man held out an old muggle newspaper, "It will activate in half a minute so get ready."

Half a minute later, they found themselves in front of Dumbledore's desk Dumbledore himself sat behind it with his watch in his hand apparently waiting for them.

"You made it on time," Dumbledore stated happily.

"I dare say we did," Fleur replied seriously, in a McGonagall tone of voice, "we passed through some really slow blue colours but made up for it by speeding by the red ones."

Dumbledore chuckled and handed them their wands, "Velvet would have adored you she always liked humans."

"You knew Velvet... but she died over 50 years ago" Fleur asked, Harry looked back and forwards between them searching for an answer of whom this Velvet might be.

“Velvet was Fleur’s grandmother’s grandmother if I am not mistaken?” Dumbledore said and glanced over at Fleur who nodded, “And was perhaps the greatest Veela to ever live.”

“So Dumbledore how come you knew my ancestors?” Fleur asked teasingly, the very thought of Dumbledore chasing veela was hilarious. Harry thought of what Mrs Figg had told him that night he was attacked by dementors ‘Of course I know Dumbledore, who doesn't know Dumbledore?’.

“Believe it or not I was once a young boy, not quite unlike Ronald Weasley and visiting veela camps was...” Dumbledore said his eyes twinkling more then ever as he remembered his youth, “...well I think you get the idea.”

Fleur giggled and Harry felt forced to produce a smile it was remarkably like conjuring a patronus. You had to focus hard on a happy memory to manage a genuine smile.

“Now Harry,” Dumbledore said, “What happened the night of Halloween is of course best kept quite and I must ask you to continue as usual, your excuse for your absence will be a potion accident in Fleur’s office.”

“Professor Dumbledore?” Harry asked and made sure that he was allowed to ask questions, he knew Dumbledore would let him but when he felt nervous, he tended to lean back on old Dursley manners. Dumbledore nodded, “Why was Selena in the forest in the first place?”

Dumbledore picked up a letter from one of the desk drawers and handed it to Harry.

“It’s my hand writing!” Harry exclaimed and tried to remember ever writing a letter like this.

Dearest Selena

Meet me in the forest behind Hagrid’s hut before the end of the feast. I think I have found a solution to your holydays troubles.

Your favourite Gryffindor

Harry Potter

PS. Don't worry about monsters Hagrid got them scared off so you will be safe.

"Hagrid got monsters scared off?" Harry asked in disbelief, "I did not write this."

"I am quite aware of that," Dumbledore said, "And I dare say that whoever wrote this letter expected to solve all of Selena's troubles."

It took a moment for Harry to realise what Dumbledore meant.

"Bastards!" Fleur said angrily.

"Because of me?" Harry asked Dumbledore faintly.

"Nothing is certain Harry," Said Dumbledore seriously, "but I fear so."

This was apparently not the right thing at the moment to say in front of Fleur.

"Don't you dare blame Harry," Fleur hissed at Dumbledore, "Don't you think he feels guilty enough without you telling him that he places his friends in danger?"

Dumbledore wore a face of utmost surprise, Harry didn't blame him Fleur could turn from happy to dangerous so fast that she appeared to be time travelling and it went even faster when she was tired.

"Please," Dumbledore said when he regained a grip on the situation, "I did not accuse Harry."

"That was a bloody stupid thing to say then!" Fleur spat. Fleur's protectiveness over Harry sent a warm wave through his body. He managed to catch one of Fleur's hand to try to calm her down, he knew Fleur would feel bad enough afterwards about her temper as it was and hoped that he could prevent her from turning into a bird.



"It's my duty as a headmaster to, if necessary, inform my students about any potential risk..." Dumbledore said defensively but unfortunately, this was not the right thing to say either.

"Your duty?" Fleur interrupted and tore her hand back from Harry, her skin started to change into feathers and she was shaking in anger, "You should have kept Miss Malfoy out of the forest!"

"I should have," Dumbledore agreed calmly.

"SO IT'S OKAY TO BLAME HARRY WHEN IT IS YOUR FAULT IN THE FIRST PLACE!" Fleur yelled completely losing her temper. The anger and fury needed for the rest of her veela transformation was received and she glared at Dumbledore with her right bird eye daring him to say anything. Harry decided that this had gone far enough and quickly pulled Fleur into a rib crushing hug.

"And that stupid second task," Fleur screeched as if fighting tears, "The thing I will miss most! It was supposed to be a stupid game!"

Fleur broke down completely onto Harry's shoulder even more so then she usual did after her transformations. Harry could feel her heart thumping sadly inside her chest.

"It's okay," Harry whispered into her ear, "Shh, Fleur I'm here it will be okay. We'll skip breakfast and go strait to bed, you are exhausted," After a few minutes when most of her tears had dried she looked up at Dumbledore.

"I'm so sorry headmaster, I know it's not your fault and I know that you do anything in your power to keep the students safe and no body can do that better then you. And I'm sorry I brought up the second task..."

"Don't apologize for who you are especially as no harm was done," Dumbledore repeated his sentence from last night, "And I don't mean you as a part veela I mean you as a person who cares very deeply for Harry and your sister. The fact that you are a part veela simply allows you to show these feelings more clearly."

Harry was very grateful for Dumbledore's words because he could feel Fleur mood rise tremendously.

"Thank you Headmaster," Fleur said and flashed him with a bright smile.

"You are welcome," Dumbledore replied.

"Professor?" Harry asked suddenly.

"Yes Harry?" Dumbledore replied.

"Won't every one know from... well from the screams what happened?" Harry asked feeling very much as if he was a first year again even though he still held Fleur tightly.

"Ah yes, that's the beauty of it," Dumbledore explained, "You picked the one night of the year when no one will think twice about any screams."

"Oh"

"Any thing else?" Dumbledore asked.

"I'm quitting potions," Harry said, "I told Snape I would."

"Alas I can not allow that it would be very odd if you just quit that class. You will have to go on as if nothing happened I dare say that there are more then one pare of eyes in this castle that are watching most of the steps you take."

"But I told Snape," Harry insisted, he already knew of course that he was being watched especially by Draco Malfoy and his cronies.

"I'm sorry Harry but this is not for you decide at the moment. Now why don't you go strait to bed, I dare say you are too tired to attend breakfast?"

"Thank you," Fleur said and they left Dumbledore's office. It was too early for most students to walk the corridor since it was a Sunday morning so Fleur and Harry walked hand in hand all the way to

Fleur's office and into their bed room. Fortunately, Tonks was fast asleep and didn't notice them. They undressed, slipped into Fleur's bed and snug up in a close warm hug. Harry was once more surprised to be so intimate with Fleur without having any bodily reaction.

"Night," Fleur said and performed a darkness hex on her bed everything turned pitch black.

"Good one," Harry replied. He could tell by Fleur's even breath that she was already asleep. It was very comforting and before Harry knew it, he was sleeping too.

Fate didn't seem to want to grant Harry or Fleur undisturbed sleep that day. A few hours later, they were both woken by a scream of surprise and something falling to the floor with a thud.

"What are you doing here?" Tonks yelled, "You are supposed to be in St Mungo's!"

"Morning Tonks," Fleur said not moving a muscle and probably not even opening her eyes Harry couldn't tell because she had her back turned to him.

"Hey I worried sick!" Tonks exclaimed, "What happened!"

"No one told you?" Harry asked sleepily.

"Dumbledore told me you had to perform advanced magic in order to save a younger student in the forbidden forest," Tonks said and Harry snorted.

"What's so funny?" Tonks asked.

"Apparently the killing curse is called advanced magic when I perform it," Harry muttered, "and unforgivable or dark arts when anybody else..."

"Shut up" Fleur snapped she whirled around in the bed so that she could face him "You did what you had to do and I don't want to hear another word of self pity from you ever!"

Harry didn't know what to reply he knew Fleur was right but didn't know what else to feel in this situation.

"You killed someone?" Tonks whispered.

"He didn't kill anyone!" Fleur snapped and then added after a moment, "just some damn spiders."

"You could actually work that curse?" Tonks asked but didn't wait for Harry's reply, "But why were you in the forbidden forest, don't tell me you were looking for unicorns?"

"Dumbledore didn't inform you?" Fleur said in her official teaching voice.

"Don't give me that McGonagall voice," Said Tonks, "Dumbledore said you would tell me when you got better, Harry."

With help of Fleur Harry told Tonks about everything that had happened that night and when he was done he felt very bad this was the sort of thing Ron and Hermione deserved to hear first, he had always told them these things at once before.

"I got to go and see Ron and Hermione," Harry said and slipped into his dirty sweaty robes, "And get fresh robes."

He was just going to give the password to the fat Lady when the portrait swung open from the inside.

"Harry" Ginny said uncertainly, she was going somewhere probably to the library judging by all books she carried.

"Get out of my way, I'm in a hurry!" Ginny snapped and walked past him swiftly. Harry sighed something was wrong with Ginny but fortunately for Harry she was horrible to everyone and not just him.

The common room was almost empty and Harry managed to slip into his dormitory without any awkward questions. To his relief the dormitory was empty. He changed into new robes and found that someone had put the Marauders Map and broom back to in his trunk. He activated it to find Hermione and Ron. After a few minutes of

searching he found them down at the Quidditch pitch. Ron and all of the Gryffindor team except Ginny zoomed back and forwards on the map. Hermione sat alone in the stands and appeared to be watching them but Harry knew she was doing homework or reading. He deactivated the map and left the castle quickly, he reached the Quidditch stands without any awkward questions. Hermione was indeed reading, her nose deep in the book not seeing anything else. Harry sat down next to her.

“What?” Hermione asked still reading not realising that Harry was next to her.

“Constant vigilance,” Harry muttered in lack of anything better to say. Hermione’s head flew out of the book.

“Ouch,” Hermione groaned and put her hand on her neck, “Harry, what are you doing here? You haven’t escaped have you?”

“No,” Harry verified.

“Oh, Harry it’s so good to have you back we were so worried,” Hermione said smiling widely “It was really hard for Ron and Ginny too, they had a row yesterday and he banned her from the team.”

“But we need her!” Harry exclaimed, “There is no way we can find another chaser.”

“I know Harry but they will make up it’s a sibling thing,” Hermione said, “So... what happened at Halloween?”

Harry told Hermione the story from his perspective she already knew most of it from Dumbledore and Selena. Dumbledore had apparently asked Hermione and Ron if they knew who had written that letter to Selena, but they had not been able to say anything except that it was not from Harry.

“I figure that death eaters got hold of your hand writing when you know...”

“They got Hedwig,” Harry finished for her.

Hermione nodded.

"You were not scheduled to regain your mental balance in several weeks?" Hermione asked.

"Dumbledore thought it was 'very extraordinary' and then he would say anything more," Harry complained.

Hermione sat quiet thinking and stared absentmindedly down at the Quidditch pitch. Harry sat thinking too but he couldn't focus his mind on his miraculous recovery instead his thoughts drifted to what Dumbledore had told him about that someone would target Selena because she was friendly with him.

"Listen Hermione, maybe we should try to not see each other..."

"Are you braking up with me?" Hermione asked jokingly "Maybe Draco Malfoy is right you do think quite a lot of yourself."

"No I'm serious, Dumbledore said that it was probably because Selena knows me and all that this happened and you are muggle born and all."

"We had this conversation in our first year Harry," Hermione said firmly, "Ron and I am your best friends and we are not letting you do this alone."

"But you don't understand," Said Harry desperately, "It's not just only you, what about you parents, Mr Weasley said that most muggle were for fun and if they just have the vaguest reason to..."

"Stop it Harry," Hermione said fiercely.

"But it's the truth and the same goes for all of the Weasley's even though they hide in..."

"I said stop it!" Hermione hissed. Harry finally shut up when he realised that Hermione was on the verge of tears. At least he thought so when she started to dig in her pocket for a handkerchief but instead she brought out a quill. She glanced around frantically and performed several charms to make sure that they were alone and that

no one was watching. When she was sure that no one was close, she scribbled some thing in her book.

'Fidelius!' Harry read silently as soon as he had read the word Hermione tore the corner of the page off where she had written it and burned it to dust so neatly that it flew away in the wind even though it was not blowing. She also made sure that the page had not leaked through any ink or that any imprint could be found on the page under. Apparently, she didn't want anyone to even suspect that her parents was hiding using the Fidelius charm.

"Oh," Harry said, "I'm sorry it's all..."

"No I would have opposed Voldemort anyway, and it's my choice not yours."

"Thanks"

Hermione gave him one of her usual smiles. He loved that smile as a brother he realised, it was a sweet open smile, not girlish or tempting just relaxed and happy.

"Harry!" Ron exclaimed and flew over to them, "You all right mate?"

"Yeah fine," Harry replied happily, it was true he felt fine most of his guilt had left him.

"What are you waiting for then?" Ron asked, "Summon your broom and get up here!"

"Ron!" Hermione scolded. "I don't think Harry should be flying! Should you Harry?"

"ACCIO FIREBOLT" Harry cried smiling apologetically at Hermione.

Hermione snorted, "Mental, just out of the hospital!"

"Keep that up and you'll turn into Madam Pomfrey," Ron teased.

"I will not," Hermione said and started to repair the page she had torn with her wand.

Harry's Firebolt came drifting through the air and hovered next to him. With a huge grin, Harry mounted his broom and kicked off.

"Hey," Harry asked Ron after a quick dive and a couple of loops to warm up, "What happened with Ginny?"

"Don't worry she'll be here next practise," Ron said carelessly, the rest of the team flew over to Harry to greet him but Ron wouldn't allow it.

"Get back to practise!" Ron barked, "It'll be time for that later!"

The team went back to practise different moves, that is everyone except Selena. Ron pretended not notice.

"Harry... or is it Potter now?" Selena asked uncertainly, it was clear to him that she blamed herself for what happened as much as he blamed him.

"It's Harry," He said and before she could apologize, he did, "Look I'm sorry if I was a bit short with you before. I didn't mean too, it just happened."

"You are not angry for what happened?" Selena asked incredulously.

"No," Harry stated, "I got caught by those spiders once and would have been eaten if I hadn't been saved."

"Thank you," Selena said, "For saving my life."

"Your welcome," Harry replied, "Have any idea of who sent you that letter, because I swear I didn't."

"Oh it was Draco Malfoy of course. I knew it at once when those... got me," Selena explained, "Quite brilliant actually if you think about it no one will be able to prove a thing."

"So he's getting away with it?" Harry asked angrily.

"Not for long," Selena said grimly, "I'll get him back one day, Malfoy honour you know."



"Look out," Andrew Kirke one of the most miserable beaters Harry had ever seen yelled. A stray bludger came pelting towards them. Harry and Selena dodged it with out any troubles.

"I'm releasing the Snitch so we can have a proper round of 'One goal'," Ron informed them, "Get into your positions!"

They had a good practise though it was a bit unfortunate that Ginny wasn't there but as she already was a good chaser it didn't really matter if she missed one practise.

"Well... what do you thing?" The author asked hesitantly, hoping to get many reviews... lol.

## Chapter 23 Malfoy honour

Potion the following week was cancelled and Snape did not return to the school until Friday just in time to teach the younger Slytherins dueling in the dueling club. Harry knew Snape would ignore him so Harry did his best to stay far out of Snape's way as possible, which was not very hard since their rings were on the opposite side of each other in the great hall.

Harry was very proud of his youngest students, even the first years were capable of performing the disarming spell now and some fourth years had begun practising stunning. It was very funny to see them duel in the end of every class they all put in a huge effort in finding funny curses in the library even though they were not required to or even asked to study on their own.

Harry still found it a bit awkward in speaking in front of so many students especially as they all called him Professor Potter, but it was a small price compared to the good feeling of doing something worthwhile, as Hermione would have put it. Ron and Hermione both had things they considered worthwhile.

Ron's was being the Quidditch captain of course and Hermione spending time bonding with the house elves in the kitchens. Unfortunately Hermione's attempt befriending the house elves were going so poorly that Ron didn't even have a heart to tease her for it. Especially not when the first Quidditch match of the season drew close, Gryffindor would play Slytherin as usual. Ron was in pieces, he sat up every night figuring out tactics and when he went to bed the other sixth year boys could hear him muttering Quidditch terms in his sleep.

On the morning of the match Ron ran around in Gryffindor tower waking the team members, he even used his broom so that he could fly up the stairs to the girl dormitories and pound on the doors even though it was forbidden even for Prefects. When he finally had managed to wake all the sleepy team members, he marched them down to the great hall for breakfast.

"Go make sure the house elves make proper breakfast," Ron commanded Hermione who had joined the team for breakfast.

“When have they not made proper breakfast?” Hermione retorted.

“Please Hermione,” Ron said dismissively. “I do not have time for argues just go down to the kitchens and make sure that every thing is as it should be.”

Hermione looked as if she wanted to argue with Ron very badly but left the great hall not to upset Ron any further.

“Now, while all you stayed in bed I was out flying,” Ron stated. Harry had never heard anyone finding so many things to say about the whether and much less being able to link them all to Quidditch as Ron did. Harry felt his eyes close he was just too tired to listen to Ron even if he was his best friend.

“Potter,” Ron barked, “Keep you eyes open or we’ll find a new seeker!”

“Sorry,” Harry muttered. Ron had never spoken to him like this but he couldn’t say that he was surprised, Ron was obsessed by Quidditch and the only person who could drag him out of his obsession was Hermione and never more then a few minutes.

“Good! You are back Hermione,” Ron said as Hermione reappeared, “The food all right?”

“Everything is as it should be,” said Hermione curtly.

“Excellent,” Ron exclaimed, “I want everyone to eat plenty we do not know how many hours we will be up there. If every thing goes as it should Harry will have caught the Snitch in time for lunch otherwise he’ll catch it in time for dinner and I don’t want to hear any whinging Virginia!”

“No Ronald,” Ginny replied and started to eat some plane toasts. She was too tired to put any thing on them instead she dipped them in her tea.

“Where do you think you are going?” Ron barked at Katie Bell who was done eating and stood up.

"I'm not hungry," Katie said firmly too used with obsessed Quidditch captains to care about Ron's tone, "And I won't whine if we are not done until dinner."

"That's beside the point," Ron said, "You got to eat more!"

But nobody heard Ron they all stared at his hair. Ron flushed badly, it was odd because Ron couldn't possibly know that his hair had changed it was much too short.

"What?" He asked blushing, his face becoming more crimson every second. Finally, his face reached a complete red colour. A colour that human skin was incapable of, except perhaps with the exception of Vernon Dursley, if you count him as human. Hermione had a superior grin on her face. The grin she wore when she had proven somebody wrong.

"You know something Hermione?" Ron demanded.

Hermione pulled a small mirror out of her pocket and handed it to Ron. Ron stared angrily in it first and then surprised.

"Very funny Hermione," Ron said with a fake grin, they all burst out laughing.

"What makes you think I did anything?" Hermione asked innocently.

"You put something in my food when you were down in the kitchens and then you just happened to have a mirror with you." Ron replied, "Now turn me back."

"Oh I don't know. I think Gryffindor colours suit him, don't you?" Hermione asked the rest of the team. They all laughed again.

"Fine, but did you have to change my hair couldn't you just made my face golden?"

"That wouldn't have been any fun," Hermione replied.

"You are a prefect," Ginny scolded Hermione in a very accurate Hermione impression. They all laughed at this even Ron at least until they realised that Ginny was dead serious.

"I'm sorry Ginny," Hermione said earnestly. Ginny snorted indignantly.

"Come on Ginny," Katie said, "It was fun even Ron thinks so."

"It was silly," Ginny replied.

"It wasn't silly," said Ron sticking up for Hermione even though he was the victim.

"Ron," Hermione said sensing an argument approaching for once, "Have you checked the conditions yet?"

"Oh... yes," said Ron gathering his mind back to Quidditch, "Right we better get out there early morning prognoses are not to reliable and I want every one to know what to expect."

They finished breakfast on Ron's command and walked down to the pitch.

"Get off that broom!" Ron bark at Ginny when she tried to mount her Cleansweep 11, "We are not having any stupid accidents today we will have a warm up on the ground first then some spins around the field before we change for the match."

"Yes my Lord," Ginny teased bowing deeply as if Ron was Voldemort.

"You know" Selena said seriously "I've never realised it before but if you rearrange the letter in your name Ron, but that's not possible, it just can't be!"

"What?" asked Ron.

"It spells 'I am Lord Quidditch'" Selena stated.

Ron stared disapprovingly around at them for a moment this was not the time for jokes, "I haven't even got a Q in my name."

This caused every one burst out laughing once more. It was very funny to see someone completely red faced and golden haired telling everyone that he does not have a 'Q' in his name. It was very good that they were able to laugh this much before a match especially as this was Selena's first match ever and Ginny's first match as a chaser.

"This is it," Ron said when they all wore their Gryffindor Quidditch robes a while later. Apparently, Quidditch captains tended to start their pre match pep talks like that.

"We have trained harder then any other team, we have earned this victory. Are you ready to show those Slytherins how to play?"

"YES!" They all cheered and left the locker room. Harry was very glad that he had not been chosen as Quidditch captain by McGonagall he couldn't have done half of the things Ron had done for the team even if he didn't teach the dueling club.

The stands were full of cheering students everyone seemed careless and happy, all everyone worried over was if Gryffindor would beat Slytherin or the other way around. No one seemed to give Voldemort much thought at the moment. Harry managed to locate Fleur in the stands next to her sat Tonks and then Hermione they all waved at them Harry and Ron waved back.

"The Gryffindors!" Ernie McMillan announced apparently McGonagall or who ever it was who chose the commentator had thought it better to chose someone who would stay more impartial then Lee Jordon had.

"Gryffindor has a new Captain, Ron Weasley! Closely followed by the star seeker Harry Potter and chaser Katie Bell. Rearrangements in the line up this year with Ginny Weasley playing chaser instead of seeker together with the newest team member Selena Malfoy! Beaters are as last year Sloper and Kirke!"

The Slytherins had apparently already entered the pitch and stood in their line up, Draco Malfoy being the captain of course. Ron walked up to Malfoy and they shook hands reluctantly when madam Hooch told them so.

“And they are off!” Ernie said but was drowned in the cheers from the crowds. It was wonderful to play a match again, Harry hadn’t realised how much he had missed it.

“Ginny Weasley got the Quaffle, Bell, Weasley again and Malfoy, oh to bad nice bludger work by Crabbe and Goyle.”

“Potty,” Draco Malfoy taunted and flew up to him choosing to mark him instead of finding the snitch on his own. “Must be hard? First, he steals your prefect badge then the mudblood and now he’s Quidditch captain too. And the worst part is he’s the son of plump and useless.”

“Shut up Malfoy!” Harry spat and tried to shake him off but the Quidditch pitch was small and there was nowhere to hide so all Harry could do was to keep flying so that Draco wouldn’t get close enough to insult him.

“Will you look at that,” Ernie announced, “Malfoy scores her first goal that makes it fifty, forty to Slytherin.”

The Gryffindors cheered. It soon turned out to one of the dirtiest games Harry had played; Selena and Ginny’s top priority seem to inflict pain rather than to score. If either of them got a good chance to fly into the side of a Slytherin they did, not caring for if they got hurt themselves, which they did. When Ginny flew strait into Goyle knocking the wind out of him and earning her a nosebleed Ron called a timeout.

“What’s the matter with you two?” Ron accused them, “We are losing points!”

“What do you mean?” Ginny asked innocently, pinching her nose to stop the bleeding.

“If you don’t stop it I’ll write to mum!” Ron threatened.

“We can’t help it, it’s kind of hard to avoid them, I mean look at the size of them,” Selena said defensively.

“I am not stupid! Knock it off or else,” Ron said dangerously.

“Right,” Ginny muttered though Harry could tell that she didn’t mean it.

“Good,” Ron said, “We are only under with fifty points, we’ll catch up.”

The chasers focused a little harder on goal scoring but didn’t seem to be able to catch up. After all this was Selena’s first match ever, Ginny had never played chaser before and the fact that the Gryffindor beaters probably were the worst of all time didn’t help the slightest.

Harry scanned the field for the snitch frantically it had not shown it self for the entire match and was statistically bound to show up any moment. He flew high to avoid the Bludgers and to get a better view of the pitch. Malfoy followed him a few feet behind. The Slytherins had just scored again and Ron threw the Quaffle over to Katie. Harry glanced up towards the Slytherin goal posts to see if there was any good chance of Katie scoring. Katie passed the Quaffle over to Selena. Then he saw it, the Snitch was hovering down by the Slytherin goal posts inches over the ground. Harry went for it Malfoy close after him. There was an ‘ohh’ from the stands when they realised that they were diving for the Golden Snitch.

“Potter has spotted the Snitch!” Ernie announced, “Malfoy close on his tale this will be a close one!”

Harry could hear the swishing sound from Malfoy right behind him, he felt a rush of adrenaline; he leaned closer to his broom and begged it to go faster. He felt another rush of adrenaline when the ground approached him much faster then if he had been falling freely. But Harry was in cool control of his dive. He stretched out his arm to catch the Snitch.

Through the rushing wind and adrenaline driven heartbeat, he heard a deep thud behind him but Harry and his brain filtered it away for the moment. Fractions of a second later Harry held the struggling Snitch in his fingers victoriously. He pulled out of the dive inches from the ground.

There was short yelp, another deep thud, and a second later a third soft thump. Harry spun around. Malfoy lay sprawled on the ground face down both of his arm stuck out in odd angles and he appeared



to be unconscious. Malfoy must have failed the dive Harry realised but then why had there been three thuds?

"Ouch," Selena said Harry looked up and saw that she was sitting on the ground a few feet away from Draco. She appeared to have crashed.

"You're hurt?" Harry asked.

"No," Selena said in a whisper "But I bet my dear cousin is."

"What happened?" Madam Hooch asked as she swept down on them. Selena's expression changed from pleased to sad and regretful.

"I was watching Harry dive," Selena said she looked as if she was on the verge of tears, "And then I must have lost control and the next thing I know I'm sitting here and my head hurts so badly. And Draco what happened to Draco? Will he be alright, he is my only cousin?"

Harry gaped at her, she was acting and she was very believable. Selena had deliberately flown into Draco Malfoy to make him crash. Madam Hooch conjured a stretcher and magic Draco on to it. His pale blond hair was red with blood that flew freely from his forehead.

"Oh no," Selena said dramatically.

"Is he all right?" McGonagall asked closely followed by Snape.

"Yes I believe so Minerva, he has a few broken bones and he needs to be taken to the Hospital wing immediately to stop the blood flow," Madam Hooch said gesturing to Draco's head.

"You come along too Miss Malfoy," McGonagall said briskly. McGonagall walked up to the hospital wing with Draco and Selena Malfoy. Madam Hooch stayed back to declare Gryffindor winner. Ron was happier then Harry had seen him in days but most of all relieved. The Gryffindor team gathered up shortly after in the hospital wing to make sure Selena was all right.

"Of all the mindless games," Madam Pomfrey complained loudly to no one particular when they entered. Madam Pomfrey was too caught up

in the far end of the infirmary no doubt with Draco's injuries to notice them. They sneak quietly over to Selena's bed.

"Shh," Selena hushed them when she saw them, "I'm trying to hear how bad Draco is."

"Sorry," Mumbled Katie, she obviously thought Selena felt guilty about flying into Draco and that it had been an accident.

"Two broken arms, five ribs broken, a punctured lung and a nasty concussion," Madam Pomfrey muttered. Selena smiled widely, pleased with her results.

"How can you smile?" Katie asked, "You're cosine is badly injured."

"He'll live," muttered Selena, trying to force a sad look but to no success.

"Are you okay then?" Ginny asked.

"Never better," Selena replied, "Madam Pomfrey thinks I was just shocked since I don't have any injures."

"That's great," Jack Sloper said, "We'll have a party in the common room think she will let you out?"

"I'm afraid Miss Malfoy will have to spend the night here," Albus Dumbledore said seriously, they all spun around none of them had noticed him entering.

Selena sighed, "I guess that there is no point telling you that I feel fine Professor?"

"I'm afraid not Selena," Dumbledore replied gently, "I'm sure that your housemates is waiting in your common room to celebrate your victory."

"Right see you Selena," Harry said.

“Yeah bye, perhaps they will let me out for breakfast tomorrow. That is unless I’m too fragile” Selena said and gave Dumbledore a very hostile Malfoy glare.

All the Gryffindors celebrated the victory over Slytherin happily in the common room. They had indeed missed lunch but it didn’t matter since Hermione, to Ron and Harry’s great surprise, had asked the elves for snacks which they had been more than happy to provide. Hermione explained that if there was to be any chance of freeing the elves they needed to be treated as humans and since she had been working many hours in the kitchens this was a fair way for them to return her favour. After dinner, Harry visited Fleur and Tonks in their office. They too had a little party and Harry told them that Selena had in fact not lost control.

“Told you girls aren’t innocent,” Tonks exclaimed, “Remember?”

“Gabrielle was innocent,” muttered Fleur sadly, putting a new meaning to the words. Harry hugged her trying to ease her pain, it was not often Fleur brought Gabrielle up like this but he knew that she always thought of her.

“Oh,” Tonks said, “I’m sorry.”

“No don’t be,” Fleur said and sighed, “You couldn’t help that.”

Fleur hugged Harry hard as if fighting her threatening tears by squeezing him.

“You know what? I think I’m going to go and see Selena,” Tonks said and left the room. Tonks knew of course that Harry and Fleur hardly kissed each other and gave them space to expand their relationship whenever they seemed close.

“She doesn’t give up, does she?” Fleur asked.

“I don’t suppose she does,” Harry replied and let Fleur settle down in his lap as she usual did when they were alone.

“I know it’s kind of early to ask since it’s only November but have you made any plans for Christmas?” Fleur asked.

Harry shook his head.

"I usually spend Christmas with my aunt, maybe we could go visit her some day of the holyday," Fleur suggested.

"Alright," Harry said, "But don't you think she... well we don't know each other."

"Don't worry she will love you I mean you and I are practically the same"

Harry smiled.

"Anyway I was thinking that perhaps New Years Eve would be a good time, Beauxbaton is always decorated beautifully," Said Fleur dreamily.

"Sure and we could spent Christmas with Remus and maybe Tonks and the Weasleys," Harry said.

"All right but what if..."

"Bill," Harry finished for her, "Ron told me he'll be spending the holyday in Egypt."

"Oh," Fleur said visibly relieved, "Then I'll ask Dumbledore for permission so that we can go to France."

The door swung open to the office swung open and Selena entered closely followed Tonks.

"Hi," Tonks said, "We are not disturbing are we?"

"No," replied Fleur, "Hello Selena."

"Hi Professor, Harry," Selena said, she was in a very good mood.

"Dumbledore said you could leave?" Harry asked.

"Nope," Tonks answered, "But Madam Pomfrey allowed her to have an extra lesson in defence against the dark arts. After all going on with life is the best you can do after a shock."

Fleur sighed, "You really shouldn't."

"Don't worry we will study hard won't we Selena?" Tonks asked pouring her a glass of pumpkin juice.

"Of course we will," Selena said smiling wider then ever.

"Now," Tonks said as seriously as she could, "This is normal pumpkin juice I want you to remember the taste so that you will know if a dark wizard poisons it."

"Oh yes Professor," Selena said obediently and took a long sip pumpkin juice.

"So what did Dumbledore say?" Harry asked.

"Not much really, since he technically can't prove I flew into Malfoy more then... you know," Selena said.

"Oh its okay, we know about that," Tonks said pouring her a glass of pumpkin juice.

"You are going to drink that?" Selena asked disbelievingly.

"Yeah, why shouldn't I?" Tonks asked.

"Oh no reason... it's just that well my parents never drink pumpkin juice they say it's for kids," Selena said apologetically.

"Oh, well if you pardon me but that's stupid," Tonks said and took a huge gulp from her glass, "I'll always love pumpkin juice."

"Me too!" Selena said and for a moment seemed younger than the facade she constantly wore.

"So Selena are you staying here for Christmas?" Fleur asked.

Selena nodded, "Ginny is staying too she said that she can't stand her family, I figure we will be the only Gryffindors unless you are staying Harry?"

"No, I'm afraid not," Harry said.

“Well I’m staying we can have load of fun,” Tonks said, Harry got the feeling that Tonks made up her mind now just so that she can stay with Selena. “We will be able to do all sorts of things. We could freeze Myrtles bathroom and skate in there. I would have gotten a huge detention when I did that the last time but I got away before anyone knew it was me.”

“You froze the entire bathroom?” Fleur asked.

“Yeah, well just the floor,” said Tonks, “But first we must get Myrtle to flood it, she will do it if we ask nicely and she will do it if we ask rudely it’s not hard.”

“And then if Hagrid joins us we might be able to catch a unicorn in the forest...”

“NO!” Selena yelled, “I mean I don’t feel like going close to that place yet.”

“Right, forgot about that besides the centaurs are mad too”

“They are?” Selena asked, “I thought they were friendly like Firenze.”

“Not really,” Tonks said shaking her head sadly, “Anyway we are going to have fun!”

Selena smiled brightly.

They had a very pleasant evening even though they mostly covered girl topics fortunately they spared Harry the worst of it and instead discussed some Quidditch. Finally, Selena looked so tired that Tonks dragged her back towards the hospital wing even though Selena protested.

“She must have had a really horrible childhood,” Fleur stated when the door closed leaving Harry and Fleur alone again.

“Yeah,” Harry agreed.

“Imagine what kind of people that not doesn’t drink pumpkin juice but also claims that it’s only for children,” Fleur said, “It’s a wonder she

turned out as well as she did even if she practically tried to kill her own cousin.”

“I can’t blame her for wanting him dead after what he did.”

“No me neither but it is not sure he did it, it’s only what Selena thinks imagine if she’s wrong,” Fleur said expecting him to agree.

“I think Draco did it,” Harry said a little more forcefully then needed. “Nobody else would be able to do anything like that.”

“So what if he’d died?” Fleur said her temper rising, “And then years later it was discovered that it was somebody else!”

“Malfoy still deserves it!” Harry replied his temper flaring too. Fleur got up from him.

“So I suppose we might as well go down there and finish him off since he deserves it?!” Fleur retorted her veela transformation not far away but Harry didn’t care he was angry.

“You know what? Maybe you should invite him to teach the dueling club as well since he is such a wonderful person.” Harry retorted back while also getting up from the chair.

“Don’t bring that up now!” Fleur hissed.

“I’ll bring that up if I feel like it!” Harry hissed back.

“I thought better of you.” Fleur said barley controlling her voice.

“Don’t hold back for me I know what you look like with feathers!” Harry said fiercely and Fleur transformed.

“Happy?” Fleur screeched, “You got yourself a veela! Bet all your friends will be jealous now!”

“Shut up!” Harry yelled.

“Fine!” Fleur spat, “Then you can just get out of here!”

"I will!" Harry snapped, "And you might as well spend the entire holiday in France alone."

"Don't expect a gift!" Fleur said and threw a fireball at him.

"I don't," Harry said firmly and left her office before the fireball hit him.

Harry was furious he had not felt this angry since this summer. He turned a corner and a suit of armor turned its head to watch him. Harry felt a sudden urge to hit something and threw a hard punch at the armor's helmet. The helmet flew off and landed on the floor noisily. He decided to run for it before Mrs Norris arrived. As he ran towards Gryffindor tower, he noticed that his right hand throbbed painfully he looked down and saw that he was bleeding severely but he didn't care. By the time he arrived Gryffindor common room, his anger had faded partly because of the fast sprint and partly because of the pain in his hand.

"Hey Harry what's up?" Ron asked as Harry entered, he and Hermione were doing homework at one of the tables, "is that blood?"

Hermione's head snapped up from her book, "What have you done, Harry?"

"I kind of punched a suit of armor," Harry admitted.

"Why?" Asked Hermione, "Mind if I try to heal it, I'm pretty sure I can, I just haven't tried before?"

"Knock yourself out," Harry said and sat down next to her.

"Right," Hermione said visibly thinking through a textbook. "Pull your sleeve up and put your hand on the table."

"So is that what you and Fleur do when you are alone?" Ron asked, "Walking around in the castle after curfew vandalising suits of armor?"

Harry didn't reply he watched Hermione first clean his wound and then with a tap and a short incantation the wound sealed itself. Harry gasped it was painful.



"Oh I'm so sorry Harry I should have told you it stings a bit," Hermione apologized.

"Don't worry it doesn't hurt anymore."

"So if you and Fleur don't vanda..." Hermione said but trailed off, as she seemed to guess why Harry hit that armor, "Did you argue?"

"It would be a little hard to have an argument with a suit of armor, Hermione," Ron said patronizingly.

"Yes," Harry agreed sadly, "We argued."

Ron grunted in surprise.

"Don't be stupid Ron Harry didn't argue with a suit of armor with Fleur of course!"

"Oh," Said Ron.

"It was just so stupid every thing was just great Fleur asked me to visit her aunt in Beauxbaton and then all of a sudden we started arguing and she did her veela stuff and then we argued some more and then I left."

"Don't worry about it, girls are like that if I'm not arguing with Hermione I'm fighting with Ginny," Ron explained.

"We've never argued like this," Harry muttered, "I've never argued like this."

"You'll be fine," said Hermione comfortingly, "She loves you and Ron is right it is normal to argue once in a while."

"I'm right?" Ron asked utterly bewildered.

"Yes Ron, for once and don't let that go to your head," Hermione teased.

Harry sighed, "I'm going to bed."

Hmm... what do you think?

Next chapter: "Azkaban cleared"

The following morning at breakfast Harry thought twice about entering the great hall, he wasn't really ready to forgive Fleur and apologize for his behaviour yet. He followed Ron hoping not to be seen from the staff table. They sat down in their usual spots just in time for the owl post.

Hermione sighed heavily when she unfolded the latest issue of the daily prophet.

"What?" Ron asked.

"It has happened," Hermione simply said, "Here look for your selves."

*Dementors raid Azkaban Hundreds feared dead!*

*Two thirty this morning, the lost Dementors reappeared at Azkaban. Unfortunately, their intentions were not to guard the prison or return to ministry control. What happened exactly remains unknown, as there is not a soul or body left in Azkaban.*

*"The alarm went off and we hurried there but there was no one left, not even bodies or dementor victim," Said Nathaniel Blowe 34 head of the auror emergency division.*

"This is mad!" Ron exclaimed, "And look at this Fudge is putting together a special anti you-know-who auror division!"

"Give that back," Hermione said and tore the paper from them.

"Oh but that is just nonsense," Hermione said as she read the article through. "He's losing support so he tries to win some back by pretending to actually do something... as if the aurors wasn't working against Voldemort before."

"And look at this," Hermione said and read aloud, "The missing you-know-who supporters are feared to be at large... and the public is advised to be cautious."

"Excellent," Harry muttered, "Just excellent!"

“Yeah,” Ron agreed darkly.

“Of course now everyone will want to join The Dark Lord,” said Hermione angrily, “Since if you get caught Voldemort will release you!”

“Calm down Hermione,” Ron said.

“Do you realise how many new death eaters there will be? There were almost one thousand prisoners in Azkaban and now the great dark lord has saved them!” Hermione wailed she was very close to tears now, “Don’t you see they will start muggle tortures for fun again.”

“Do you really think it’s that bad,” asked Ron, “I mean not everyone in Azkaban can be bad enough to become a death eater.”

“Does it matter?” Hermione asked, “What would you do if Voldemort turned up in your cell where you had lived alone for a long time, in the company of a starving dementor and asked if you want to become a death eater?”

Ron sighed, Hermione was right as usual. The three of them looked up at the staff table to see how Dumbledore would react to this news but he wasn’t even there. Instead, McGonagall stood up she was just ready to make a speech. The depute headmistress cleared her throat and asked for every ones attention.

“As some of you may already be aware he-who-must-not-be-named has attacked Azkaban and freed the prisoners,” McGonagall said clearly. “Hogsmeade visits and Quidditch is cancelled until further notice.”

“WHAT?” Ron yelled and stood up, “Quidditch is cancelled this year, again?”

“I am afraid so Mr Weasley,” McGonagall said apologetically, “Furthermore the grounds are out of bounds after six o’clock sharp. Prefects, there will be an additional meeting after dinner to discuss the increased security.”

"Guess it really is bad," Harry said, "Normally Dumbledore announce these things."

"Yeah and no Quidditch," Ron added gravely, "I mean I can live without Hogsmeade..."

"How can you even think of Quidditch?" Hermione exclaimed, "It's a bloody game! People are going to die!"

"Shush Hermione," Harry hissed, "You are going to start a panic."

"It's a very good time for a panic!" Hermione hissed back through gritted teeth with a forced smile on her lips, "I thought you knew what it was like before!"

"Consider yourself safe, if odds are anything to go by you two are not going to die since everyone else in my damn life is dead," Harry replied angrily.

"Oh Harry I'm so sorry I didn't think," Hermione said quickly, "It's just that my family won't even be able to defend themselves, you remember what happened at the world cup."

"Yeah," Harry said, "Its okay I didn't mean to snap at you like that either."

Hermione smiled faintly at him.

"And not being able to play Quidditch won't make anything better," Ron said as he sensed that Hermione was in a forgiving mood. She was, she threw her arm around Ron and gave him a quick kiss. Harry had never seen them kiss in public before, not like a couple anyway, but didn't really care he just tried to ignore them as much as possible just as he always did when he caught them kissing.

"Perhaps Quidditch is overrated," said Ron, completely forgetting that he was not alone with Hermione. Harry couldn't help snickering.

"Shut up Potter," Ron said in a friendly sort of anger.

"I got to remember that one," Harry said grinning widely.

“Obliviate,” Ron muttered starting on a toast.

“Umm Harry,” Fleur said from behind him, Harry was surprised he had not expected her to forgive him so easily.

“Yes,” He answered trying to keep his voice cool but it sounded just as friendly as usual.

“Can I have a word with you?” Fleur asked carefully.

“Sure,” Harry said, giving up on the idea to play hard to get since his voice wouldn’t let him.

Harry followed Fleur out of the great hall and quickly up to Fleur’s office. Harry noticed a black burn mark on the door when he closed it behind them.

“I don’t blame you if you won’t forgive me, I am not sure I would,” Fleur said looking down on the floor.

“Either way I just wanted you to know that I am sorry and if you don’t want to,” Fleur’s voice broke, “continue seeing me I understand.”

“What?” Harry asked Fleur didn’t reply and after a short moment of frantic thinking Harry continued, “This is not about the veela part is it?”

“What else,” Fleur said her French accent coming through clearer then ever.

“Oh Fleur,” Harry said grabbing one of her hands with both of his, “I thought we were through with the veela stuff, I thought you knew feathers or fireballs didn’t bother me.”

“Are you sure?” Fleur asked raising her head to look at him.

“Yes,” Harry said confidently, “But next time we argue I’m looking forward to stay mad at you for a little longer.”

“You are so sweet,” Fleur said throwing her arms around him.

"I'm sorry too, I do expect a gift you know," Harry said, hugging her back.

"That's good cause I already got you something," said Fleur, "I don't think Dumbledore will let you go to France after Azkaban and all but if you still want to, I can ask."

"You know you are in danger by being with me don't you?" Harry asked, "And probably your aunt too."

Fleur laughed loudly, "I'm telling you Harry if my aunt ever gets near a death eater she won't aim to stun, not after what they did. And the same goes for me."

"No you won't," Harry said smiling sadly, "Well I couldn't anyway."

"You mean Wormtail?" Fleur asked, "Perhaps, but my aunt will kill them. And if I being with you means that she have a chance of getting near death eaters she will announce our wedding."

Harry laughed even though he was very uncomfortable joking about weddings with Fleur.

"Now that there is no Quidditch any more maybe we could have the dueling club two times a week instead," Fleur said changing the subject, perhaps sensing Harry's discomfort about weddings.

"Yeah, it would be useful too, now that there are so many death eaters and all," Harry agreed.

Fleur smiled brightly, "I'll ask Dumbledore then."

It was decided a few days later that the younger years would have an extra lesson on Sunday afternoons and the older years Wednesday evenings. The announcement of the extra dueling lessons was met with cheers and more students then ever attended them, partly because of the increased death eater threat and party because Harry had made himself quite a reputation when he defeated Snape.

November slowly turned into December and the late fall turned into winter. McGonagall was running around with her list of students who

wanted to stay for the holidays. Harry felt very good that he didn't have to sign up on that list; the days when he had not had any family to spend Christmas with was gone.

Dumbledore had to Harry and Fleur's surprise given Harry permission to go to Beauxbaton for the New Year's Eve. Of course, he had forbidden them to speak about their trip and much less tell anyone not even Ron and Hermione until they were back at Grimmauld place for Christmas.

Since there were no Hogsmeade visits anymore, all students relied heavily on owl orders. Hermione had a great idea for Tonks Christmas gift but it would be expensive so Harry, Ron, Ginny and Fleur went in on it. Hermione was now so confident in her enchantment skills that she thought she was up to making a Quick Quotes Quill for Tonks that was unbreakable. For Hermione's complex enchantments, a normal eagle Quill would not be enough so instead they ordered an expensive Phoenix tail feather and a robust metal Quill case. Hermione spent most of December with Arithmancy charts and huge Enchantment books from the library creating long incantations to make the Phoenix tail feather an indestructible self-inking Quick Quotes Quill.

Harry also spent much time with his Christmas gifts; he had decided to get Fleur jewellery or something with a good protective charm. He sent owls to everyone from Remus to jewellers in Diagon alley and Hogsmeade to find the right thing.

"Potter," Snape spat, "Stay after class, we need to arrange for your detention!"

The Slytherins snorted extra loud at these words because usually Snape gave a reason when giving detentions, but Harry didn't argue he owed Snape some fun in class at the very least.

"Yes Professor," Harry replied swallowing his pride bitterly. It was the final potion class before Christmas and for once Snape had them doing something else than antidotes. Today they were making warmth potions that would cause the drinker to resist extreme cold even without winter clothes.



"As a Hogwarts tradition," Snape said as if he hated everything to do with any sort of tradition.

"You are allowed to keep the potions you have brewed, but if anyone uses them at Hogwarts there will be detention. Class dismissed!"

Harry poured his potion into a vial and sealed it, he had done the potion well and he estimated that there would be enough for about four persons. He quickly cleaned up after himself and sat down to wait for the rest of the class to leave.

"Harry," whispered Hermione, "If you are going to get a detention he has to give you a reason for it it's in the rules."

"It's okay Hermione," Harry replied trying to smile reassuringly.

"Right see you later," Hermione said and left the dungeons to wake Ron and eat lunch.

"Potter," Snape said dangerously when they were alone.

"Yes Professor," Harry replied and stood up. The feeling of guilt he'd had after the cruciatus curse was fading quickly.

"Hagrid won't expect you for care of magical creatures this afternoon and you are going to miss lunch." Snape said provokingly.

"Yes sir," Harry said forcing himself to reply civilly.

"We are going to the chamber of Secrets now," Snape informed him.

"I'll get us some brooms so that we don't have to slide down the pipe and so that we can get back up," Harry said.

"Very well," Snape said, "Be in the girls' bathroom in five minutes Potter."

"Yes Professor," Harry replied and ran out of the dungeon, if he was going to make it to Myrtle's bathroom with two brooms in five minutes he would have to run. Six minutes later, he approached Myrtles

bathroom a huge sign hang on the door. It read 'KEEP OUT' in huge green letters.

"You're late Potter," Snape said when Harry entered the bathroom.

"Sorry sir," Harry panted and handed Snape one of the brooms.

"Harry, why haven't you been to see me?" Myrtle asked sadly, gliding through the door of her toilet.

"GET OUT OF HERE!" Snape spat furiously, apparently, he was not in the mood of having parts of Harry's fan club around.

Myrtle stared at Snape but did not leave.

"Please Myrtle this is not a good time," Harry said hoping not to make Snape more furious than he already was.

"When is a good time then?" Myrtle asked boldly.

"Tomorrow," Snape replied, "Get lost!"

"Fine Harry tomorrow then," Myrtle said.

"Can I bring my girlfriend?" Harry asked hoping to make Myrtle realise that he didn't want to spend time with her at least not if Myrtle was going to flirt with him.

"Your girlfriend?" Myrtle asked hesitantly.

"She is a veela," Snape said for once taking Harry's side. Myrtle flew down her toilet with a shriek so violently that water splashed all over. Harry couldn't help feeling bad for Myrtle but on the other hand he was not going to be her boyfriend to make her feel better.

"Get going Potter," Snape commanded.

Harry nodded and walked up to the malfunctioning sink.

"Open," He hissed in parseltongue and the entrance to the chamber of secrets opened. It wasn't very difficult to speak in parseltongue whenever he wished too anymore.

“Go on Potter,” Snape commanded, Harry mounted his broom and entered the pipe.

“Professor?” Harry asked as they flew down.

“What is it Potter?” Snape replied irritably from right behind him.

“Once we are down in the passage we have to keep quiet, Lockhart caused a cave-in last time and I’m not sure how safe it is.”

Snape didn’t reply and after a few moments of flying down they landed.

“This is it?” Snape asked incredulously.

“This is the beginning of the passage,” Harry said, “Follow me.”

“Lumos,” Harry muttered and the tip of his wand lightened. They walked in silence until they reached the stone blocks that had caved in. Harry started feeling sick; he had nothing but horrible memories of this place.

“How do we get past?” Snape asked when Harry stopped.

“Ron shifted some stones over there,” Harry said and gestured to a small opening.

“Go on then Potter,” Snape said, though he didn’t raise his voice above a whisper.

Harry climbed up on some rocks and through the opening, when he was through he heard Snape muttering a vanishing spell and a huge rock disappeared.

“Go on,” Snape urged him when he too was past the cave in. Harry gritted his teeth and continued.

“The Basilisk is dead Tom riddle is gone Ginny is safe,” Harry muttered to himself repeatedly to keep his nausea away. It worked fairly well until he reached the final door to the chamber.

He closed his eyes hoping to get rid of his nausea. This was the place most of his nightmares about the chamber begun and it was always the same thing. He always entered walked passed all the Snake statues, found Ginny, then Voldemort would take his wand and called for the Basilisk to finish him. The main difference in his dreams compared to what really happened was that Fawkes never appeared in his dreams.

“Open,” Harry said, but it was in English he didn’t focus hard enough.

He hated himself for a moment, he was a Gryffindor, he had killed a basilisk with Godrik Gryffindor’s sword, and there was no reason for being weak now especially not in front of Snape. He opened his eyes and focused hard on snakes and tried again, “open,” He hissed this time it worked.

“The Chamber of Secrets,” Harry announced focusing hard on being a Gryffindor.

Snape didn’t reply he entered the chamber looking around in the same way Harry had the first time he had visit Diagon Alley. Harry followed Snape into the chamber; they walked slowly up to the huge statue of Salazar Slytherin. At the statue’s feet lay the dead basilisk.

Fortunately, it had decayed enough so that only the skeleton and the skin were left. Harry was on the verge of throwing up and if there had been any rotting flesh left, he was sure he had been violently sick.

“You got to be joking?” Snape said forgetting for a moment that he didn’t like Harry, “You killed that... that snake with a sword!?”

“F-Fawkes destroyed its eyes first,” stammered Harry. He noticed that he was standing exactly where Ginny had been lying. His legs could not carry him anymore and he sat down.

“The heir,” Harry said abruptly to focus on something else then his sickness and before Snape could notice how badly he was feeling, “Would approach the statue and say in parseltongue ‘Speak to me, Slytherin, greatest of the Hogwarts four’ and then Slytherin’s mouth opens and the Basilisk slithers out.”

“How do you know?” Snape asked disbelievingly his usual cold fury back in full force.

“I saw it,” Harry said shortly. This shut Snape up, a completely new experience for Harry. Snape instead started to investigate the basilisk corps.

“Tell me Potter how did you manage to survive?” Snape asked in a voice that was probably meant to be spiteful but came out as if Snape really wanted to know.

“Fawkes brought me the sorting hat with Gryffindor’s sword in... the sword in Dumbledore’s office,” said Harry awkwardly, not feeling like discussing things like this with Snape. The only one he had told everything about what happened was Fleur, he had told her how scared he had been and how small he had felt. Ron and Hermione knew most of it too but he’d never told them what it felt like.

“Why Potter didn’t you use your wand?”

“Tom Riddle took it from me,” Harry said feeling very stupid, he knew had been very naïve back then.

“How did you get rid of Riddle?” Asked Snape, forgetting Harry was a Gryffindor and James’s son completely.

“I pierced the diary with one of the Basilisk’s fangs,” Harry said, assuming Snape knew about the diary, “The fang should still be over there somewhere.”

Snape walked over to the area that Harry had gestured and picked the fang up wearing his dragon skin gloves. It was black with ink, red with Harry’s old blood and a little dark green with old poison. Snape ran his finger over Harry’s dried blood and fixed Harry with his gaze. Harry had no idea what Snape was thinking.

“Shredded basilisk skin is extremely valuable,” Snape muttered after a moment, “And so is powdered basilisk bone and fangs, not to mention useful.”

“Help yourself,” Harry replied.

“Indeed I will and you are going to assist me Potter,” Snape said angrily as if just had realised he had almost been polite

Harry levitated the basilisk upside down a foot above the ground in a long strait line while Snape skinned the snake with a skinning charm. After about an hour when was done with the skinning Snape started on the bones. Several hours later Snape had pulled the skeleton apart with magic and put the bones in a pile on the damp floor, the only thing Harry hovered was the skull. The scull was broken and there was a hole in the back of it where Harry had pierced it with Godrik Gryffindor’s sword.

“I don’t suppose you want to keep the skull as a trophy?” Snape asked surprisingly gentle.

“No,” Harry answered, “But if you don’t want that fang with ink on it.”

Harry had had a lot of time thinking while levitating the snake and he thought that perhaps if he had that fang nearby when he woke up after his nightmares he could reassure himself faster that the basilisk and Tom Riddle indeed was dead and gone.

Snape smirked, “How very Slytherin of you,” He said but handed Harry the fang.

Harry looked at it for a moment before he pocked it. It felt a little unreal actually having an object that his nightmares so often plagued him with in his pocket.

“Let’s bring the skin up first and then after dinner we will begin on the bones,” said Snape again surprisingly gentle.

Harry nodded and together with Snape folded the snakeskin. About thirty minutes later they had with much effort brought the entire Basilisk skin into one of Snape’s dungeons were he usually, judging by the equipments, prepared potion ingredients.

“Be back in the bathroom in an hour and bring Miss Granger,” Snape commanded.

“Yes sir,” Harry replied hoping that Hermione wouldn’t have any problems entering the chamber of secrets, she would no doubt be the first muggle born student to enter the chamber ever. Harry hurried towards the great hall, he was starving and dinner was just about to start. He slipped into a bathroom on the way to wash his hands.

“Harry, I’ve been meaning to talk to you,” Colin said in a surprisingly relaxed voice.

“Yeah, what’s up?” Harry asked, Colin had not talked to him much this year and Harry was happy to hear that he seemed to be over with his the-boy-who-lived obsession.

“Denis and I have been thinking about starting a study circle for the dueling club and we were wondering what you think about that,” Colin asked.

“Uh, sounds great you could use the room of requirements and I’ll borrow you some books I used in the DA,” Harry said approvingly.

“Thanks Harry,” Colin said, “So heard you got a detention from Snape, the git.”

“Yeah, but it isn’t too bad,” Harry said truthfully. Colin was really pleasant to speak with when he didn’t worship him. They left the bathroom and headed towards the great hall talking about how to organize the study circle.

“Would you mind if I go sit down with Hermione I need to speak with her,” Harry said, it wasn’t really nice of him to just desert Colin when he entered the great hall like that but he really needed to talk to Hermione.

“Sure no problem Harry,” Colin replied.

“Thanks see you later,” Harry said and walked off to Hermione and Ron who was arguing as usual.

“But that’s the point of Quidditch,” Said Ron exasperated.

"No it is not, Quidditch is a game it's for fun nothing more," Hermione replied and then spotted Harry, "Harry! Where were you? You missed lunch!"

"I was down in the chamber... gathering potion ingredients," Harry said he didn't want to spoil his or his friend's appetite by elaborating into the details, "He wants you to help after dinner too Hermione."

"Me?" Hermione asked looking pale, "But why couldn't he ask anyone else I mean Salazar wouldn't want a muggle born in his chamber."

"Use your brain Hermione firstly you already know all about the chamber and secondly you are the brainiest student he has ever had," Ron said. Hermione cheeks turned a faint colour of pink and she focused on her food.

"But he better give you some house points for it," Ron added.

"I'm not too sure about that he might consider it a treat enough in itself to let you down there," said Harry.

"So what kind of ingredients are we gathering?" Hermione asked, now when she had gotten used to the idea she sounded very excited.

"Let's just finish dinner first," Harry said shortly.

They ate in silence. Ron and Hermione didn't finish the food they had on their plates and Harry could tell that they had already imagined what kind of ingredients they were collecting. Harry felt a little sick too, for some reason his brain continued to broadcast the images of the dead snake but Harry was too hungry to care.

"Is it Basilisk stuff?" Ron asked when Harry was done with his food and leaned back.

"Yes, but it's not too nasty it's just the bones left, we already got the skin."

"Are you all right about it?" Hermione asked she knew of course that Harry had frequent nightmares about the chamber.



“Well enough,” Harry replied shortly, “Snape wanted to meet us in about...” Harry glanced down at his watch, “fifteen minutes and we better get you a broom too.”

“I figure Snape might let you come too Ron,” Harry said politely.

“Thanks Harry, but no I couldn’t stand him even if he let me,” Ron replied, “I’ll follow you to the door.”

“You can take my Firebolt Hermione it’s much easier to fly then the school brooms and I got to leave something in my trunk too,” Harry said as they left the great hall.

“What do you have to leave?” Ron asked, “Hold on it’s not something from the chamber is it?”

“It is,” Harry said and when no one was looking, he brought out the fang.

“Wow,” Ron said awestruck.

“Is that the fang?” Hermione asked quickly, “It must be really, really, valuable seeing as it is about a thousand years old, not to mention the fact that it’s a fang from Slytherin’s monster.”

“Snape was acting really weird down there,” Harry said, “He asked me if I wanted the entire scull.”

“He did,” Ron exclaimed.

“Yeah and he was treating me as if I was a Slytherin,” Harry said.

Ron burst out laughing, “Good one Harry you almost got me there...”

Harry couldn’t help smiling, “No he really was, well almost bearable.”

Ron gave him a searching look, “You are not serious are you?”

“I am,” Harry said, “Wait here I’ll be right back.”

They were now in the common room and Harry sprinted up the stairs to his dormitory to get his broom and deposit the fang.

"You know if I'd known all Snape needed was a good curse," Ron said when Harry came down the stairs from the dorm.

"Ron," Hermione said disapprovingly, "That is not something to joke about especially not as you are a prefect."

"I know I am a prefect you tell me hundreds of times a day!" Ron retorted.

"Heavens knows what you would get up to otherwise," Hermione said rolling her eyes.

"Enjoying a good joke once in a while perhaps," Ron muttered not loud enough for Hermione to hear him but Harry knew Ron didn't mean that.

"Good to see that you are on time for once Potter... That was not too bad was it?" Snape asked as he and Hermione entered the Myrtle's bathroom.

Harry didn't reply.

"Well get going," Snape said unpleasantly.

Harry opened the entrance and flew down Hermione and Snape following him, they left their brooms at the end of the pipe and walked through the stone passage to the door that led into the actual chamber.

"Open," Harry hissed at it and it swung open. Hermione grabbed his arm painfully hard. He could tell that she was scared and he couldn't blame her he was a little bit scared too even if this was the third time he was there. After all, every snake statue seemed to be almost alive and neither of them was pureblood.

"Hermione," Harry said and she loosened her grip slightly. Snape moved passed them and walked in front of them up to the statue.

"That's the scull?" Hermione asked.

"Yeah," Harry said grimly, "And over there are all the bones," He gestured to the huge pile Snape had made.

Snape told them that they were going to powder the bones with a pulverising charm. Hermione got the hang of it at once and managed to pulverize the bones to powder. Harry's pulverizing charm didn't work as well as Hermione's he had to recast it several times to reduce a bone to powder. They placed the powder in glass jars that Snape conjured and after several hours of hard work, there was not any bones left except the skull.

"I'll bring the jars you bring the skull," Snape commanded, "Locomotor Jars!"

"Locomotor Cranium," Cried Hermione, Harry smiled it was so typical Hermione to call the skull 'Cranium' when performing magic.

A few minutes later Harry sealed the entrance to the chamber of secrets and a few minutes even later they were down in one of Snape's dungeons.

There was an awkward silence when Harry and Hermione had placed the skull on a table and now they were not needed any more but couldn't leave until Snape granted them permission. It was made even more awkward since every teacher except Snape would give house points for Hermione's work at the very least.

"Twenty points to Gryffindor," Snape said, but then seemed to regret his generosity and added in a growl, "For not being a know-it-all for once Granger... Now get out of here I got work to do!"

"You deserved more than twenty points," Harry said when they were on their way back to Gryffindor tower.

"Well the way I see it, we will get to do much more expensive potions now so in a way I got more than house points," Hermione said, "What day is it... oh wait it's the eighteenth that's an even number."

"Going for a bath?" Harry asked he knew that even dates were the girls turn to use the prefects' bathroom.

“Yes I believe I will,” Hermione said making up her mind.

“All right I will take the broom back,” Harry said taking his broom from Hermione.

“See you later then?” Hermione asked.

“I was hoping Fleur...” Harry said but cut himself off before he could say that he hoped that she wouldn’t mind sharing bed with him. He really felt tired and at the same time, he didn’t want to be alone. He was certain he would have severe nightmares and hoped Fleur would be able to wake him if he did.

“Oh,” Hermione said looking right through him, “I’m sure that wouldn’t be any problem.”

“Right,” Harry said and blushed, Hermione pretended not to notice.

“Tomorrow then Harry,” Hermione said happily and strolled off towards the prefects’ bathroom.

Yay! Harry and Fleur made up... for now anyway...

This was kind of a hard chapter to write... I wanted Snape to loosen up a bit without being out of character. I want Snape to respect Harry and I figured a trip down into the old chamber would do the trick...

How did it go?

Please Review!

## Chapter 25 Christmas

*"Ginny!" Harry begged, "Please don't be dead please! Please wake up!"*

*"She will not wake up," A cold high pitch voice said with amusement. Lord Voldemort as tall and snake like as ever appeared standing next to them, Harry's wand in his hand.*

*"Voldemort," Harry whispered in disbelief.*

*"Have not your parents taught you some manners Potter?" Voldemort asked, "You will call me Lord Voldemort as I am the greatest sorcerer of all time!"*

*"You're not!" Harry said with much more courage then he felt.*

*"But you are much mistaken I am indeed the most powerful sorcerer of all time." Voldemort said with a hint of a smile as if almost pitying Harry for not knowing better.*

*"But Dumbledore..." Harry said trying to reason with him.*

*"Do you really think so Potter?"*

*"Yes," Harry said firmly.*

*"Then why isn't Dumbledore helping you? Why has he left you to die here?" Voldemort asked, "Not even his damn bird is here!"*

*Harry knew Voldemort was right Fawkes was supposed to be here but somehow Voldemort had become too powerful, powerful enough to prevent Fawkes from helping them. He and Ginny was going to die, the only comfort being that Ginny was unconscious and would not notice a thing.*

*"Speak to me, Slytherin, greatest of the Hogwarts Four!" Voldemort said to the huge statue of Salazar Slytherin in plain English. Slytherin's mouth opened and Harry knew that he had to run but he didn't. There was no point, Fawkes was not there and he wouldn't stand a chance against a basilisk with his bare hands. He decided to*

*curl up next to Ginny instead and await his death together with her. All of a sudden, Ginny felt warm and alive and she was moving, Ginny was not supposed to move, he knew somehow.*

*"Don't be afraid it will all be over soon," Harry said comforting, he could hear the basilisk uncoiling it self on the floor in front of the statue.*

*"Harry," Ginny said.*

*"I'm here," Harry replied but Ginny didn't seem to hear him.*

*"Harry!" Ginny said again this time more forcefully.*

*"Shh, its okay it won't even hurt," Harry murmured, his voice oddly sluggish.*

*"HARRY!" Ginny yelled, or was it Ginny? He was not quite sure.*

*"HARRY WAKE UP!"*

Harry woke with a start and leapt up from the bed before he could take in the situation. He was in Fleur and Tonks's room and both of them was watching him anxiously. After a few seconds, his memories returned. Fleur had let him spend the night in her bed even though it was strictly forbidden. The room was now dark only lit by a candle on Fleur's bedside table.

"You were dreaming," Fleur said reassuringly and hugged him, "It was only a bad dream, Wingbeat."

Harry took a deep breath he was almost hyperventilating and he was covered with sweat.

"Was it about today?" Fleur asked, softly wiping his forehead with her pyjamas sleeve. Tonks walked back to her bed performed a couple of charms on it, probably a silencing and a darkness charm, and went back to sleep.

"No, well it was about the chamber," Harry said, "It was the usual, but you woke me up before the really bad part begun."

“Want to tell me?” Fleur asked and made Harry sit down on her bed.

Harry took a deep breath and told her about all the details. He had never told any details before only that he usually had nightmare about the Chamber, the graveyard and that veil Sirius disappeared behind and sometimes about the philosopher’s stone as well. Fleur held him tightly while he talked and rocked him gently back and forwards.

“It’s silly, it happened almost four years ago,” Harry said apologetically.

“It is not,” Whispered Fleur firmly, “You are the bravest person I know... after Gabrielle.”

They sat in silence for a few minutes and Fleur held him. It felt very good, normally when he had a nightmare he would pull out his invisibility cloak and just run away and not return to the dormitory until it was time for breakfast. His room mates knew about his nightmares and didn’t ask him were he had been if they found his bed empty. Ron would of course worry and locate him on the marauders map if he was gone. Ron would never admit that he did this and Harry would not say a word if he found his map somewhere else in his trunk then where he had put it. Harry hoped his roommates were going to think that he had suffered another nightmare when he was missing from his bed the following morning and not that he had spent the entire night in the defence against the dark arts teacher’s bedroom.

“You go back to sleep,” Harry said, “I’m going to take a shower if it’s okay?”

“Help yourself,” Fleur said and leaned back in her bed.

It was as nice as always to wake up next to Fleur and somehow their pulses had synchronised again. His roommates didn’t seem to think there was anything odd about him returning just to change clothes though Ron had probably seen spotted him on the map, judging by his constant grin. They spent the day doing homework and visiting Hagrid. There was a leaving feast in the great hall since most students would be leaving for the Christmas holyday the following day.

Harry felt a little bit sad when they left Hogwarts in slays pulled by Thestrals the following day, he imagined what Christmas at Hogwarts would be like. He regretted for a moment that he had decided to leave Hogwarts, but then he remembered that he would spent it with the Weasleys and that he would go to France with Fleur. This would definitely be the best Christmas ever.

Harry, Ron, Hermione and Fleur got a compartment for themselves on the Hogwarts express. Harry found it very comfortable to be travelling inside the warm train, drinking hot chocolate that the witch with the food trolley sold when it was freezing outside. Harry had his arm tightly wrapped around Fleur and she leaned her head on his shoulder. Ron and Hermione had snuggled up against each other as well and looked very comfortable.

"Who would have thought this last Christmas," Harry said abruptly nobody had said a word for the last half hour.

"Yeah," Ron agreed, "Dad must have been in the hospital and you were hiding because you thought you were being possessed by you-know-who."

"I was not hiding," Harry retorted.

"Was too," Ron said childishly, but didn't wait for Harry to answer instead he turned to Hermione, "And you was going to strap on those pieces of wood and rush down mountains."

"It's called skiing and it is very fun," Hermione said firmly.

"I was home with Gabrielle and mum and dad," Fleur said smiling slightly at the memory, "I had not seen any of them for many months so Gabrielle was really happy to see me. I transfigured all kinds of animals and we were having so much fun."

They all sat in silence after these words not daring to say anything that might upset Fleur but Fleur didn't seem to sad at all instead she had a far away dreamy smile on her face. It slowly become dark outside and Harry nodded off to the rhythmic sounds of the steam engine.



Harry dreamed of Gabrielle and Fleur playing with different kinds of animals that Fleur transfigured from cushions in the sofa they were sitting in. Gabrielle and Fleur was laughing and giggling. It was not hard to tell that Gabrielle's greatest idol was Fleur and that Fleur treasured her sister above everything else in the world. Harry didn't wake up until it was time to get off the train.

"Harry it's so good to see you again," Mrs Weasley said when it was Harry's turn for the compulsory hug at platform nine and three quarters.

"You have grown! Look at you, starting to fill out like a grown man." Harry blushed, though it was nice to know that someone cared for him in that motherly way.

"Oh but I wish Ginny could be hear too," Mrs Weasley told the group.

"She wouldn't leave, we tried to persuade her but she said she wanted to do well on her OWLs." Ron said.

"I know dear," Mrs Weasley replied and turned to her husband, "Our little girl is growing up Arthur."

"Yes, I remember when you were in that age," Mr Weasley replied and then looked exactly as Ron usually did when he thought he had said too much.

"All ready to go?" Remus said, "I think we can get through the barrier now."

"I will go first just to make sure, then Hermione and Fleur," Mad-eye commanded. "And then I think Harry, Arthur and you Remus and then finally Molly and Ron to keep up the rear."

"We are a bit short on the guard," Moody growled when they were all through the barrier and walked towards Grimmauld Place, "But Albus informs me that you can take care of yourself efficiently."

"If he says so," Harry said. Why did Mad-eye Moody always pick awkward topics?

“Severus is an excellent dueler with many years experience of dueling the hard way,” Moody said, his normal eye watching where they were going and his magical swirling around and living up to Moody’s nickname.

They passed numerous shops full of peoples doing their Christmas shopping. It was snowing hard; huge snowflakes fell from the dark winter sky. It was hard to see very far but Harry didn’t care to him it was perfect winter weather. Moody and Remus didn’t seem to agree with his opinion of the weather both of them had closed in on Harry closely so that he almost had problems walking. Behind him Ron and Hermione walked closely followed by Mrs Weasley and in front of them was Mr Weasley and Fleur.

“Darn weather,” Moody growled, “Can’t se a damn thing, smell anything Remus?”

“No I’m afraid I don’t, fresh snow terminates most of it,” Remus replied. As a werewolf, Remus had a very developed sense of smelling.

“Let’s circle this block once just to make sure,” Moody ordered they walk swiftly around the block.

“I think we got floo powder,” Remus said to the group and they all tightened in on Harry even further.

“Cover yourself with this!” Moody commanded in a whisper, pulled out an invisibility cloak from inside his cloak and handed it to Harry.

“In the middle of the street?” Harry asked.

“Just do it Potter!” Moody snapped. Harry knew it was a serious offence to show any kind of magic in front of muggles but obeyed Mad-eye anyway. A woman stopped dead in her tracks and dropped her shopping bags. She stared at the empty spot between Moody and Remus where Harry was.

“Obliviate,” Remus said coolly and with a very quick flick with his wand when passing by the woman she forgot what she saw.

"Nice one," Ron muttered behind him.

"I think I got him," Moody growled, "Bearded, long hair, next to that muggle burger restaurant got that Azkaban look."

"Are you sure Alastor?" Remus asked.

"Yes, but I got to make sure that he is alone," Moody said and slowed down a little. "Damn we should have travelled with port key or by muggle vehicle at least!"

"What about Taxi?" Remus asked and threw a quick glance over at the street.

"That would be a good idea I got some muggle money and that plastic card Albus handed out to all of us," Mr Weasley said enthusiastically.

"Good, Arthur get that Taxi. Kids, Mrs Weasley, Fleur and Arthur go with it," Moody ordered.

"But there is a limit they can't take that many passengers," Hermione said, "I think they have a limit of four peoples and Harry's invisible."

"Persuade the driver I authorise the imperius," Moody said dangerously. Mr Weasley was ecstatic even though the graveness of the situation. The taxi driver didn't seem too exited though when Mr Weasley explained quickly that they would be five travellers.

"I only take four," The Taxi driver said irritably, "Take the buss or split up!"

"But you don't understand sir," Mr Weasley said desperately.

"Surely you wouldn't mind little me?" Fleur asked in her sweetest voice and blasted the driver with her charm, "I wouldn't take much room and you got such a big Taxi."

"I-I-If you say so miss," The driver stammered, he would probably agree to anything Fleur asked him.

“Thank you kind sir,” Fleur said and they started to pack themselves into the car. Mr Weasley of course seated himself in the front seat and the rest of them in the back. It was very difficult for Harry to sit down without the driver noticing since he was still invisible. It was not made easier by the fact that the driver stared mesmerised at Fleur in the mirror and that Harry had to sit in Fleur’s lap. Next to Fleur and Harry sat Mrs Weasley and next to her Ron with Hermione in his lap, Ron and Hermione blushed furiously.

“My nose,” Fleur hissed silently when the Taxi started, Harry had accidentally bumped his back into her. The driver who continued to look at Fleur in the mirror seemed to think that Fleur was flirting with him and winked back at her and Harry.

“Oh yes you got electric windows,” Mr Weasley said enthusiastically, “I had an old Ford once but it only had cranks.”

“Oh Really?” The driver said not paying any attention to what Mr Weasley was saying.

“Yes and is that a mobility phone?” Mr Weasley exclaimed.

“Sure,” The driver agreed.

“Fantastic, brilliant not even wires... but it does run on electricity?”

“Battery,” The driver replied.

“Oh of course! I got a fine collection of batteries,” Mr Weasley said proudly. After several questions later about the car’s different equipments, they arrived Grimmauld place and the car stopped outside number eleven.

Mr Weasley glanced back in the back seat with a triumphant smile and held out a master card.

“I’ll take it on the card,” Mr Weasley said clearly, as if it was some kind of password.

“Excellent,” The driver said and took the card from Mr Weasley.

“Ingenious,” Mr Weasley said breathlessly when the driver drew the card through the card reader and it started to print the recite.

Even Mrs Weasley Ron and Fleur seemed to think this procedure was interesting because they all bend forward as much as they could to get a better look.

“So no money is necessary?” Mr Weasley asked uncertainly.

“You just paid on the card,” The driver said uncertainly.

“But how do you get any money from that card?” Mr Weasley asked.

“It transfers from your bank account to the company’s account, are you all right sir?” The driver asked.

“Oh yes absolutely,” Mr Weasley ensured and they all started to get out of the car.

“I’m really sorry about this,” Mr Weasley said and pulled out his wand, “Obliviate!”

“Was that really necessary dear?” Mrs Weasley asked.

“Yes I’m afraid it was we can’t afford anyone finding out that he drove anyone here.”

They all stopped for a moment between number eleven and thirteen and focused on number twelve before they entered Black manor.

“Think Moody and Remus are all right?” Ron asked his father.

“Yes of course, no single death eater will be stupid enough to try anything with old Mad-Eye around he got quite a reputation,” Mr Weasley said matter-of-factly.

“But if he wasn’t alone? What if there were more of them?” Hermione asked.

“They both carry portkeys. If things get out of hand, they disappear and if Alastor Moody was right about the Azkaban look then the

ministry will know if they do magic. All Azkaban prisoners' magical signatures are carefully recorded by the ministry."

"But Sirius could do magic... at least last year," Harry said from underneath Moody's invisibility cloak.

"That would be Dumbledore's doing, just as we suspect you-know-who has changed his faithful supporters' signatures or just cleared them from the ministry lists," Mr Weasley explained as they entered number twelve Grimmauld place.

Mrs Weasley cooked a wonderful warm soup they all enjoyed immensely for dinner. Half way through Remus and Moody arrived and joined them.

Remus rubbed his hand hungrily before he tucked in, "Mmm, this is delicious!"

"Every thing went all right then?" Arthur asked.

"Yeah poor the bastards is as good as dead," Moody said grimly, "Azkaban prisoners that never had any intentions of joining the death eaters."

"There were two of them?" Hermione asked Remus nodded in reply. "Did you find out what they wanted?"

"They were supposed to try and find out where..." Remus took another spoon of soup, "we spend our Christmas."

"But why are they as good as dead, did you duel?" Ron asked eager to hear of some action.

"No," Moody replied after a spoonful of soup, "Voldemort will get them for being discovered."

The shock of hearing Voldemort's name seemed finally to have become a so daily business for the Weasley's that none of them commented.

"Can't the ministry do anything?" Hermione asked.

“They could,” Mr Weasley said in a final tone that said that he did not agree with how things were working in the ministry at all.

“So,” Fleur said after a moment of silence that followed Mr Weasley’s words, “Now that we will not be overheard I would like to inform you all that Harry and I are going to my aunt over the New Year.”

“Your aunt?” Ron asked dipping a piece of bread in the remains of his soup.

“Nancy Lyon, she teaches charms at Beauxbaton,” Harry explained.

“Oh Nancy,” Remus said looking up at Fleur, “she was an exchange student a year under us... in our sixth or seventh year I think. We got along quite well but she had to go home early because of Voldemort.”

Harry felt very sorry for Remus he didn’t have much in life. The things Remus treasured most were his memories of his friends who were gone for different reasons. Remus had himself to blame for that, Harry realised, Remus always held back his own life because he was a werewolf.

The following days they were busy decorating for the Christmas celebrations and when Christmas finally arrived Black manor was hardly recognizable.

Harry and Fleur had both been in very fragile moods and cried quite a lot in Buckbeak’s old room. Hagrid had as he said he would, taken the Hippogriff back to Hogwarts. Christmas after all was a family holyday and last year this time this year Sirius had been singing carols.

They had a huge Christmas party for the order members on Christmas Eve. Dumbledore and Hagrid arrived when dinner was done at Hogwarts and celebrated with the rest of them. The only one missing at least the only one Harry missed was Tonks she was always very funny at these types of occasions. He wondered for a moment if Tonks and Selena had frozen Myrtles toilet jet.

“A Christmas gift for your thoughts,” Dumbledore said merely and brought Harry back to reality.

“Oh, Merry Christmas Professor,” Harry said, “Tonks and Selena were planning on freezing Myrtle’s bathroom.”

“Again? I remember having Argus Filch in my office about that special event several years ago, he was rather upset since he is not allowed to enter a girl’s bathroom without notification and by the time he had notified the students I am afraid Nymphadora was mysteriously gone.”

“But how did you know it was Tonks ice-skating then?” Harry asked.

“Ice-skating?” Dumbledore asked and chuckled, “I should have suspected there was more to it than just freezing the floor.”

“You are not going to forbid her are you sir?” asked Harry, he hoped that he had not ruined Tonks and Selena’s plans.

“I happen to enjoy ice-skating, I think that I might even put a notice up so that I may have a go at it,” Dumbledore said and stretched his long legs as if preparing himself for ice-skating.

Harry chuckled, he felt a little light headed due to all Butterbeer he had been drinking. “Just watch out so you don’t fall down into the chamber.”

“I understand that you have done the school a great favour by securing expensive potion ingredients,” Dumbledore said, “I dare say that Severus was quite impressed.”

“Why is that Professor?” Harry asked, “All I did was to levitate the Snake.”

Dumbledore smiled, “You killed a thousand year old legendary basilisk without magic and destroyed Tom’s diary.”

“Oh,” Harry said blushing slightly, “but I could never have done it without Fawkes and I would have died doing it if Fawkes hadn’t saved me.”

“I can imagine your mother gloating at your father for you inheriting her modest personality,” Dumbledore said eyes twinkling.



Harry smiled.

"Fawkes gave another feather this semester, his third as you might remember," Dumbledore said.

"Is it going to be another wand?" Harry asked.

"No, I don't think Fawkes intended another wand with this feather," Dumbledore said, "You see Harry, Fawkes gave me that feather the moment you and Fleur left my office that morning you arrived back from St Mungo's."

"Oh," Harry said wondering what Dumbledore was getting at.

"Perhaps we can go somewhere less lively?" Dumbledore asked.

"Certainly," Harry said becoming more and more curious every second, "Should Fleur come along as well?"

"Yes I think that would be a good idea," Dumbledore replied and waited at the drawing room entrance for Harry to get Fleur.

Harry found Fleur talking to Hagrid about animal classifications. Fleur was equally upset with the classifications as Hagrid was since pure Veela had been rated as four starred beasts after the world cup when one of the veela had burned someone. After a few moments Harry, Fleur and Dumbledore was up in Buckbeak's old room. Dumbledore had told Fleur about the feather Fawkes had given right after they had been in Dumbledore's office on the way.

"As you both know Phoenixes are remarkable animals they have many rare abilities and make highly faithful pets," Dumbledore informed them, "Unfortunately not everyone has the magical power to have a Phoenix."

"Can't one just buy them?" Harry asked.

"Phoenixes are very proud animals and would never allow themselves to be traded. I got Fawkes by befriending a very old phoenix in Egypt many years ago. After weeks of persuasion the old phoenix gave me one of his tail feathers and wet it with a tear."

Harry didn't know why Dumbledore was telling him this but Fleur obviously did, "And you managed to enflame it?" She asked.

"Yes," Dumbledore said.

"And Fawkes was born from the ashes?" Fleur pressed on, Dumbledore nodded, "I wish I could have seen that."

"That leads us straight to the point because Fawkes wet this feather," Dumbledore pulled out a long golden Phoenix feather, "with a tear."

"But there is no way either of us could make it burn," Fleur said, "Even if we could we are way too young."

"You are indeed very young. I expect you would be the youngest ever if you succeed," Dumbledore said.

"Wait a moment are you asking us to create a phoenix?" Harry asked he had always assumed that Phoenixes was born from eggs just like normal birds. "But why can't you do it yourself Professor you could probably do it much better."

"I could, but I already have a Phoenix and lovely creatures as they are, two of them would be a little much," Dumbledore said.

"Are you sure Headmaster?" Fleur asked, "And do you really think we could enflame the feather?"

"Yes and Fawkes seems to be too," Dumbledore said thoughtfully, "Besides I offered Harry a gift for his thoughts earlier this evening."

"But you don't have to Professor," Harry said even though he bought a Christmas gift to Dumbledore as an apology for the things he broke when Sirius had died. Tonks was going to give it to him; it was of course woollen socks that were enchanted not to make any sound at all when you walked in them.

Dumbledore smiled gently, "If you can make the feather burn then you are worthy a phoenix."

Harry and Fleur glanced briefly at each other and made a silent agreement they both wanted a phoenix since they both liked Fawkes very much. Dumbledore seemed to guess their decision because he brought out the feather again and placed it mid air. Harry gaped he had never seen anyone do magic like this.

“This feather is so full of magic that it is very easily influenced even without a wand,” Dumbledore explained and pulled out his wand for some reason. He flicked his wand and a bird stand appeared it looked like the one Fawkes had. With another tiny flick of his wand, the feather loosened from the air and float down to the bird stand.

“So we just...err burn it, with magic?” Harry asked uncertainly.

“Both yes and no, Harry,” Dumbledore said seriously, “To enflame this feather you have to use magical power to the extent of your ability.”

“How do we do that sir?” Harry asked, hoping he wouldn’t be needed to exhaust himself magically like he had done on Halloween.

“I am sure both Professor McGonagall and Flitwick have taught you how to relax before attempting a more difficult spell, this is very much the same but as you create a mental connection with your phoenix...”

“Sorry professor, but it’s going to be in my... our heads?” Harry interrupted.

“That is a matter of definition but yes, in a way.”

Fleur nodded eagerly for Dumbledore to go on.

“I’ll perform a mind opening charm on you first so that the phoenix can bond correctly with you, it is not necessary but since it will bond with both of you it might need a little help.”

Harry and Fleur nodded.

“Liberare Anima,” Dumbledore said lazily and flicked his wand elegantly over them. Harry didn’t feel any greater difference but then

he looked at Fleur. He could feel how much he loved her cleared then ever.

Fleur smiled at him she probably had the same feeling. Her smile, made Harry feel directly ill, he couldn't look at her. His emotions were too strong he figured.

"It'll were off after a minute or two," Dumbledore said.

"It feels good," said Fleur happily, "So what do we do now?"

"Now you simply have to make it burn, Incendio should do"

"Does it matter which one of us who performs it?" Harry asked.

"No not as long as you have skin contact with each other," Dumbledore said, "Holding hands will do."

"You better do the magic Harry since you got a feather from Fawkes in your wand" Fleur said and walked up next to Harry.

"Right," Harry muttered, "So it is hard to make the feather burn?"

"Yes of course it is. Why do you really think I let you go first?" Fleur teased.

"Can have several tries?" Harry asked.

"If you need," Dumbledore said.

Harry pulled out his wand and focused his mind on fires, "Perhaps Hermione should do this instead..."

Neither of them replied but Harry hadn't really expected them too. He took a deep breath and slowly exhaled as Flitwick and McGonagall always had taught him to do before attempting difficult magic.

Harry squeezed Fleur's hand hard, "INCENDIO!"

The Phoenix feather burst into huge hot flames for a couple of seconds and when they had burned out, only the ashes remained.

“Excellent,” Dumbledore said, “You have now forged a Phoenix.”

“It really worked?” Fleur asked and stepped up to the little pile of ashes pulling Harry along.

“Yes, now I will leave you to bond with it, and you might want to think of a name,” Dumbledore said and left the room.

“I can’t believe this, you forged a Phoenix,” Fleur said and kissed him almost forcefully.

“But I bet anyone could do that, it wasn’t hard at all,” Harry said licking his lips.

“I did seem very simple,” Fleur agreed, “But it can’t be or everyone would have phoenixes, they beat owls... Look it’s moving!”

A little golden beak started to move among the ashes and after it a featherless neck.

“Hello little one,” Fleur cooed. The little baby Phoenix blinked its black eyes at Fleur and then at Harry.

“We need a name,” Harry told their Phoenix softly.

“What about the-bird-who-flew?” Fleur teased.

“Why can’t you just ask it in bird language what it wants to be named?” Harry retorted.

“Is it a boy or a girl?” Harry asked after a moment of silence when they both tried to figure out names.

“Neither I think Phoenixes doesn’t work like that they are forged remember?”

“Great that leaves us with twice as many names to choose from,” Harry said. Fleur carefully stretched out a finger and patted the tiny bird’s head and beak.

“What about Peak?” Harry asked Fleur and the tiny Phoenix.

"No, I don't think so," Fleur said, "What about Vertex instead?"

"Sounds good, do you want to be named 'Vertex instead'?" Harry asked and patted the tiny bird with one finger. The baby phoenix let out a little squeak and tried to stand up.

"Vertex it is then!" Fleur said, taking the little squeak as an affirmative.

"This is so strange," said Harry abruptly, "We just got a phoenix from Dumbledore."

"Yes and you managed to forge it too, you are a really powerful wizard you know," Fleur said.

"Are you sure about the forging part being difficult?" Harry asked, he could not understand what the hard part of the flaming could be.

"Yes absolutely, but we better get some herbs for Vertex to eat and I have no idea of where to get them," Fleur said.

There was a loud knock on the door, "Can I come in?" Hagrid's voice asked gently. Harry opened the door for him.

"Dumbledore told me!" Hagrid exclaimed, "He told me you two made a Phoenix!"

"Ahh the little tyke," Hagrid whimpered at the sight of Vertex, "Hello there little fellow."

"Got a name for it yet?" Hagrid asked eagerly.

"Vertex," Fleur stated smiling proudly.

"Little Vertex," Hagrid said and carefully patted the phoenix's head, "I always knew you two were special and now you forged a Phoenix."

"I got some herbs here, always keeps some in case I run into Fawkes." Hagrid told them and waved a little bag he had been carrying, "Order them from Egypt. Best phoenix food there is!"

"That's great Dumbledore left before he could give... hang on Dumbledore knew you had some didn't he?" Harry asked.

“Great man Dumbledore never misses anything,” Hagrid said, “I reckon it’s better if you feed him, trusts you better since you forged him. Have you told Ron and Hermione yet?”

“Better go and tell them then I’ll be back in a minute,” Hagrid said and left the room. “A Phoenix,” He muttered happily to himself on the way out.

“I figure this will be in the papers when every one in Hogwarts finds out,” Fleur said, “The-boy-who-lived forges Phoenix.”

“Do you really think they would write that?”

Fleur raised an eyebrow.

“They would wouldn’t they,” Harry said darkly. The prophet wrote everything they could lay their hand on about him, things like his OWL results was as well known, as Voldemort was a dark wizard.

There was a quick knock on the door and before Harry or Fleur could say anything, it opened.

“Harry is it true? I can’t believe it, you forged a phoenix and you are not even twenty!” Hermione said very quickly and entered the room with Hagrid and Ron.

“Oh... he is so little, have you got a name yet? Better try and keep Crookshanks out of here, I don’t think he will harm a phoenix he knows better than that but he may frighten it... Did you have a name yet?”

“You already asked that,” Ron stated from behind Hermione.

“It’s Vertex,” Harry said.

“Ohh, congratulations Harry!” Hermione exclaimed suddenly and threw her arms around Harry in a bone-crushing hug.

“Thanks Hermione,” Harry said and squeezed her gently.

"You do realise how rare Phoenixes are don't you?" Hermione asked bossily a few moments later, "There are about twenty-five of them in whole Britain and everyone who has forged them has been at least thirty. You got to register it with the ministry of course Phoenixes are class four animals and needs to be registered."

"I can do it," Fleur said, "After all I named him."

"It's a 'him' now?" asked Harry.

"No but we can't call him 'it' can we?" Fleur replied.

"Why not she?"

"Fine, you call him she and I'll call him he!" said Fleur.

"No, no problem we'll call him he," said Harry teasingly, Fleur groaned in exasperation.

"He looks hungry," said Hagrid when the little Phoenix let out another squeak.

Fleur opened Hagrid's bag with herbs and pulled a green fresh looking plant of some exotic origin. Fleur pulled of a green leaf and held it up to the new forged Phoenix. After a few seconds of sniffing, the Phoenix nibbled the leaf. They were all even Hagrid, amazed by the amount of food Vertex ate. A little later, when Vertex had finished his second plant Ron and Hermione left them to assist in the kitchens or at least that is what they said. Hagrid left as well a while later to get back to Hogwarts.

Harry and Fleur stayed up very late that night. Fleur told Harry everything she knew about Phoenixes to make sure he didn't do anything wrong.

"Don't worry I already know how to take care of birds," Harry teased her, "I'm rather good at it too, don't you think?"

"Very good," said Fleur, she was too tired to have a playful argument instead; she lay down on the huge bed. "I'm tired I'm going to sleep."



Harry made sure that Vertex was all right for the night and then lay down next to Fleur. Fleur sleepily snuggled up on Harry's arm with her back towards him. Harry put his arm around her and pulled her close.

Harry smiled widely as sleep took him, it was Christmas and he had a family, again.

Review... **Please!**

## Chapter 26 Gifts and Holyday pranks

They awoke abruptly the next morning by Vertex's first attempts of singing; it was rather good at least for a bird that was only a couple of hours old.

"Harry?" Fleur asked sleepily.

"Yeah," Harry mumbled he was awake though he had not yet opened his eyes.

"We better get up it's time for presents," She said and made an attempt to sit up but Harry didn't let her go instead he pulled her closer.

"I love sleeping with you," Harry said without thinking. Fleur spun around in his arms and faced him. Harry opened his eyes and watched her.

"I love you Wingbeat and if you want to take the next step..." Fleur said seriously but trailed off hoping he would understand.

"What? Oh that... well unless you really want to I can wait," Harry said jerkily he was not awake enough to have serious conversations.

"Are you sure because I wouldn't mind," Fleur said smiling reassuringly.

"Let's not decide like this, when the moment comes it comes," Harry said, he didn't know where that sentence came from but he knew it was true. He had no control over those feelings after all and it would feel wrong just taking the step because neither of them minded.

"I love you Harry," Fleur said and kissed him quickly before she got up.

"Wow Vertex you have grown!" Fleur exclaimed, "You got se this Wingbeat!"

"Is that the same phoenix?" Harry asked but somehow he could feel his magical connection with the bird and knew it was Vertex. Vertex

had become about twice as big as he was the night before and had started to sprout red and golden fluffy feathers.

"Can you feel that?" Harry asked focusing on his connection.

"Yes... it nice," Fleur said hesitantly, "I didn't think we would actually feel it."

Vertex made another attempt on Phoenix song perhaps to tell them that he could feel the connection as well.

"You must be hungry little-one if you've grown that much over the night," Fleur said and handed the bird another green herb, "I have to go and buy you some more of these, hope I can find some good enough in Diagon Alley."

"Just blast the salesman and he'll travel to Egypt to get the best for you," Harry said teasingly.

"May I remind you Mister Potter of that nurse at the hospital you charmed to ignore several hospital rules," Fleur retorted.

"She didn't ignore rules," Harry said defensively.

"Yes she did, you left your room without a healer's permission, you walked the corridors after curfew, you visited a patient way after visiting hours and you brought me along," Fleur said teasingly. "That is at least four hospital rules, if anything had happened that nurse would have been in loads of trouble. And it's not only females, when we first met this year you managed to get free ice-cream."

"Right I give in" Harry said grumpily.

Fleur smile victoriously, "Delacour: one, Potter: zero."

"Oh Fleur my love how can you be so heartless?" Harry asked dramatically.

"I'm a veela," Fleur said and gave him an evil smirk Draco Malfoy would be proud of, but unlike Draco, her eyes were warm and happy not cruel and cool.

"You're cute when you're mischievous," Harry stated completely ignoring Fleur's smirk, "Now I want my gift!"

They all gathered in the drawing room and opened their gifts together with Remus and the Weasleys except Bill, Percy and Ginny. Neither Mr nor Mrs Weasley seemed to be too sad about their missing children since, according to Fred and George, they had all sent gifts and greetings with owls.

Harry had enjoyed Christmas shopping this year since he had not entered a single shop much less been gawped at, all his gifts had been bought by owl order. Never before in his life had he bought as many gifts as he had now.

To Ginny and Selena, he had bought sweats from Honeydukes. For Hermione a book about curse breaking so that she could learn how to remove enchantments. Ron had gotten a Quaffle so that they would no longer have to play with apples when they were not in school. Mr Weasley got a rather advanced muggle calculator and Mrs Weasley a letter writing kit.

He and Ron had bought the most serious, boring looking ties they could find and Tonks had helped enchanted them so that they would force themselves on and not come off.

Remus was perhaps the hardest one to find an appropriate gift for, after much thinking Harry finally settled on a set of new robes. He hoped Remus would not be offended by the gift.

The countless hours he had spent finding some jewellery with a good protective charm had paid off. In the end he had ordered a silver bracelet lined with deep blue Sapphires, it would look good on Fleur but that was not the point. He had spent more then half of his parent's money on it but it was worth every Knut several times over. The bracelet was carefully enchanted to push the wearer out of the way of the killing curse. Harry wanted to make sure that Fleur was not killed like Cedric and most of all like his mother. He knew that he under no circumstances could live if Fleur died to save him.

"Oh Harry," Fleur said breathlessly when she opened his package, "It's so beautiful!"

Harry smiled and Fleur put it around her left wrist where it adjusted itself so that it would not slip off.

“Oh,” Fleur said, self-adjusting bracelets was not to usual even in the wizarding world, “You didn’t pay too much for it did you?”

“No,” Harry said truthfully, nothing was too expensive when it came to Fleur’s safety.

“I worked for Gringotts as a curse breaker. I know when things are too expensive,” Fleur said, looking as if she didn’t know if she should be happy or angry with him for spending too much money.

“I got it at a fair price,” Harry said and then added to make her just accept his gift, “Why don’t you like it?”

“I adore it but you shouldn’t have,” Fleur said at once. “Are there any special features?”

“No I don’t think so, just some kind of protective charm,” Harry lied. He wouldn’t tell Fleur anything in case it didn’t work as planned or worse she would try and force Harry to wear it if they ever got into battle.

“Promise you will always wear it no matter what?”

Fleur gave him a searching look as if to see if Harry was hiding something, “Sure,” She finally said, “I promise.”

“Good,” Harry said and smiled he felt much better knowing that Fleur was not going to die by the killing curse.

“Open mine now!” Fleur said and handed Harry a flat soft package.

“Robes?” Harry guessed.

“Absolutely not!” Fleur said, though Harry knew by the way she answered that his guess had not been far off. He opened the package carefully and pulled out a rather stiff black cloak.

“A cloak... a dragon skin cloak,” Harry stated.

“No much better Graphorn hide,” Fleur said proudly, “And I made it myself!”

“You made this by yourself? I didn’t know you could sew and isn’t Graphorn hide grey not black... or is it dark green?” Harry asked holding up the cloak and admiring it. It was very well made and even though it was a bit stiff, it fit him perfectly, perhaps just a little too wide in the top.

“First of all yes I can sew that’s what two veela with inborn dress-sense does when they spend to much time alone. I used to do all my clothes myself when I was in school veela usually do. Secondly Flitwick made it dark green instead of grey,” Fleur said proudly, “And look at this STUPEFY!”

Red sparks shot from Fleur’s wand and hit Harry in his side before he had time to realise what had happened. The impact made Harry stumbled and he took a step to steady himself.

“What did you do that for?” Harry asked irritable, rubbing the sore spot where the stunner had hit him. The room had gone quiet and every one had stopped their gift openings.

“Is that dragon skin?” Charlie asked enthusiastically, “Not much else could reflect a stunner like that!”

It had not occurred to Harry until now that he wasn’t stunned.

“Graphorn,” Fleur said proudly, “Flitwick colored it for me.”

“You made it yourself?” Hermione asked, “How did you make it fit so well?”

“Tonks is good with memory charms,” Fleur said and flashed a guilty smile at Harry.

“I posed for it?” Harry asked trying to force down a stupid grin and failing miserably.

“Yes, and more then once,” Fleur said, “But it paid out didn’t it?”

"It's wonderful couldn't have made it better myself," Molly Weasley praised. They all congratulated Fleur on her handy work and went back to opening their Christmas gifts.

"Thanks it's wonderful," Harry said and he really meant it. He had never gotten a gift he liked this much before except for his Firebolt.

Fleur smiled at him, "I've been working on it ever since term started."

"Now you made me feel bad I only spent a month picking out your gift," Harry complained.

"Don't, I love this bracelet," Fleur said and held her left arm up to show him. "Besides if I am right you paid much more for this than I paid for the hide and mind you it was not cheap."

"Perhaps," Harry said, "You'll never know will you?"

"I'll make you talk sooner or later Potter, I am a patient girl," Fleur said grinning mischievously.

"Good one Potter," Fred called across the room dryly.

"Absolutely spiffing, Ron," George added just as dryly.

Harry looked up at them and saw that they must have opened his gifts because they were both wearing ties that made them look almost as serious as Percy usually did.

"That's lovely dears," Mrs. Weasley said, fondly surveying the twins, "I can't believe how much you have grown up since last Christmas."

Harry bit his tongue painfully hard to keep himself from laughing aloud at the sight of the twins.

"Let's take a photo," Harry said, fighting with every ounce of willpower he could muster to keep his face straight.

"All of us," He added so that the twins wouldn't have a chance to disappear.

“What a wonderful idea Harry. Arthur will you summon the camera?” Mrs. Weasley asked.

“Let’s get up around the Christmas tree,” Ron said and stifled a chuckle by pretending to cough.

“I think there will be enough room for everyone to stand in front of the tree,” Hermione told the twins who had tried hiding behind it.

“We’ll get you Potter!” Fred said angrily, though Harry knew that they were thrilled to be challenged like this.

“Your days are marked,” George added.

“Huge smile,” Arthur said when he had charmed the camera to take the photo by it self and run around so that he was standing among them, “Say Weasley.”

“Weeeeeeeasley!” They all chorused and the camera photographed them with a flash.

“That will be a good one,” Harry said and the twins glared at him. He wished Ginny were here no one could work her brothers as well as she.

“I can develop the photo tomorrow,” Remus offered, “And I’ll make a few extra copies for every one who wants one.”

“I’d love one,” Harry said, he wondered for a moment if Remus had realized what they were doing to the twins, “And perhaps one extra just in case.”

It turned out that everyone wanted at least one photo except the twins. The twins forgot to pretend being angry when they discovered that they had more presents to unwrap. Everyone was very pleased with his or her gifts; Harry got many gifts he liked very much though all of them fell rather pale next to Fleur’s cloak. Ron had bought Hermione a rather nice necklace for the money he had saved on the canceled Hogsmeade trips. Hermione had for once not given Ron something useful; she had given him a small Quidditch pitch with small flying players very useful to plan new strategies on.



After lunch, a few hours after the gift openings, Remus and Fleur apparated into Diagon Alley to buy herbs for Vertex. Harry had brought Vertex down from Buckbeak's old room to the drawing room where they all sat. Both Ron and Charlie were beating Harry mercilessly in Chess. Hermione sat nearby reading the different books she had gotten while absentmindedly fingering her necklace Ron had given her.

It was good to see Hermione so hopelessly happy in love but it was also a bit sad, Fleur never looked so utterly in love and he knew that his emotions were not that visible on him. Perhaps he and Fleur just were not that kind of people, perhaps they had once been before their families had died. Harry remembered the previous night when Dumbledore had opened his mind and he had felt all his love for Fleur clearer than ever, it had been directly painful, but still he didn't desire her as much as he knew he should. Sometimes when he missed her terribly, he fantasized about her but those fantasies always disappeared when he saw her again. However, it didn't really matter he was very happy with Fleur the way it was.

Vertex continued to practice his phoenix song in the drawing room, he had become quite good at it by now and could play several tunes. To Harry's big relief Crookshanks didn't seem at all interested by Vertex, he liked the little chessmen much better anyway.

"Can't you charm something else for him to chase, Hermione?" Ron asked when Crookshanks had tried to attack the still playing chessmen for the third time.

"Sure when we are back in Hogwarts," Hermione replied and gave Ron a sweet smile. Ron literally melted.

"Figure out a good enchantment and I will perform it for you," Charlie said from his chair, he was reading Harry's dueling for masters.

"All right can you conjure a toy mouse?" Hermione asked, "It doesn't have to be anything fancy just make sure it has legs."

Hermione started rummaging through all her books to figure out a good incantation while Charlie conjured a mouse. A few minutes later

of frantic scribbling and Quick Arithmancy calculations, Hermione had a good long incantation ready.

"I've only briefly balanced it so it may be a little tricky to perform," Hermione said, "But you shouldn't have any problems."

"Right can I have a look at it?" Charlie asked and Hermione handed over her notes, "Wow this is good. Have you ever considered being an enchantress?"

"A little," Hermione said, "It would be fun but then you either work developing brooms or creating protective charms or if you work for the ministry setting up wards and I don't think I want to do any of those."

"You could start an animal toy company," Charlie said.

"Why just not a toy company?" Ron asked.

"Yeah that too," Charlie agreed and started to rehearse the incantation. A few minutes later a little toy mouse ran around on the floor, it was unlike a real mouse, charmed so that it would not only hide from Crookshanks but also try to sneak up on him from behind. Vertex enjoyed the show from his stand and seemed to cheer on the toy mouse with excited squeaks.

By the time Fleur and Remus returned, Crookshanks and the mouse had fallen asleep together. Vertex had put his head under his wing something only baby Phoenixes did since their neck got too long when they were physically mature. Vertex had grown unnaturally fast and was now almost half the size of Pigwidgeon. He looked like a fluffy red tennis ball when he was asleep, becoming quite cute since he got his feathers and was no longer bald.

Fleur smiled at the sleeping Vertex, she was very proud of him. Harry was very proud too but he had not gotten over the shock yet of having a Phoenix. He had always believed that they were too expensive or rare for him to even consider having as a pet. Vertex must have sensed Fleur's presence or perhaps he had smelled the herbs she had with her because he awoke and gave a soft shrill.

“Hello there handsome,” Fleur said and patted the phoenix gently, “Between you and me,” Fleur whispered to it only Harry could overhear, “Your feathers are much softer than mine.”

The Phoenix squeaked and flapped its tiny wings proudly.

“Think you will be up to flying soon?” Fleur asked and opened a paper bag with the text ‘Diagon Alley Apothecary Always Open’.

“Hope you like these, they are not specially imported from Egypt but I hope they will do for now,” Fleur said and started to feed the little phoenix.

“Goodness that bird knows how to eat,” Hermione stated, “Perhaps you could ask Neville to help you to grow those herbs by yourself.”

“Yeah, but don’t you know?” Harry asked.

“Of course I know how to grow North African herbs, but Neville would appreciate you asking him and besides I don’t have time to spare,” Hermione said glancing involuntarily over at Ron, “With house elves and all.”

The Christmas passed quickly in Black manor. Vertex learned how to glide down from his stand the following day and the day after he managed to flutter his little wings hard enough to fly up again. He grew quickly and everyone had fun sending him around the house with messages. Pigwidgeon arrived just in time for Vertex to learn how to fly and became good friends. Unlike Hedwig, Vertex did not judge Pig by his capability to behave as a post owl and seemed to think of him as a playmate. Vertex had also started to figure out how to disappear but so far, he just managed to flicker.

“That’s the longest time yet!” Harry praised his Phoenix when it flickered back after a couple of seconds, “Wish I could disappear like you would save me loads of trouble.”

“You are not planning any rule breaking are you dear student?” Fleur asked.

“Me?” Harry asked innocently, “I’ve never... mmmm will you be giving me detention professor?”

There was a couple of knocks on the door to Buckbeak’s room.

“Dumbledore is down in the kitchen,” Ron’s voice said.

“He got Fawkes with him,” Hermione’s voice added through the door.

Harry stood up and straightened his shoulder for Vertex. Vertex seemed to have a sixth sense when it came to read Harry and Fleur’s minds and fluttered over to Harry shoulder.

“Fawkes gave the tail feather you were forged from,” Fleur explained for Vertex, “And Harry got another of his feathers in his wand. He’s a great Phoenix saved Harry’s life too.”

“Twice,” Harry added. They knew he couldn’t understand what they really was talking about but he did understand that they were talking to him and he appreciated it.

Vertex tried to hoot as Pigwidgeon usually did but failed and instead whistled a few typical Phoenix tunes. He was quite good at it now and liked to reply when he were spoken to.

“Took you long enough,” Ron said when Harry opened the door.

“Bet you two could figure out things to do if you got bored waiting,” Harry shot back.

Ron blushed but Hermione didn’t care.

“Hello Vertex,” Hermione said, “Care to disappear for me?”

Vertex gave a little whistle in reply and flickered away for a couple of seconds. The little pressure on Harry’s shoulder vanished and then appeared again on his other shoulder. Disappear was one of the few words Vertex understood.

“Wow! That was really good,” Hermione praised, Hermione was almost as taken by the little bird as Harry and Fleur were.

Vertex sang a few tunes proudly in reply to Hermione's praise and Hermione giggled something she very rarely allowed herself.

"What do I call her?" Harry asked abruptly he had been nervous about meeting the last part of Fleur's family.

"Who?" Fleur asked.

"Your aunt," Harry said, "Should I just call her Ms Lyon or should I call her professor or madam?"

"Just start out with Madam then she'll let you call her Nancy."

"Don't worry Harry it will be fine," Hermione said.

"Yeah," Ron added, he was the only one who seemed to realize that Harry's fears were not illogical, "And if all goes to hell you are only staying two nights."

"That's a positive way to look at it," Harry said sarcastically.

"You will be fine she'll adore you." Fleur said, "Besides you are a Gryffindor!"

Vertex blew a few encouraging tones and Harry felt a little better.

"Good afternoon," Dumbledore said when they entered the kitchen. Dumbledore was sitting in one of the chairs around the table and Fawkes was perched on his shoulder. Both Arthur and Molly Weasley were there as well.

"Hello," Harry and Fleur chorused.

Vertex seemed very anxious in meeting a fellow Phoenix.

"Professor Dumbledore, Fawkes this is Vertex. Vertex, Professor Dumbledore and Fawkes" Harry introduced them.

"Hello Vertex," Dumbledore said politely, "We heard your wonderful singing a little while ago."

Vertex gave an uncertain little whistle in reply. Fawkes seemed very proud over what his latest tail feather had become and replied.

"Cup of tea?" Molly Weasley asked Dumbledore with a teapot in her hand.

"Why don't you offer our guest an herb?" Fleur asked and held up a green herb for Vertex.

Vertex seemed to understand what Fleur meant and with a couple of quick wing beats, he was over at the table and placed the herb in front of Fawkes. When the herb was placed on the table, Vertex flickered and disappeared only to appear again a second later on Fleur's shoulder.

Dumbledore chuckled, "Already apparating are we?"

"Yes, but that was the longest so far," Fleur said and then added quietly, "You are so clever sweetie."

Vertex blew a short response.

"It won't be long until young Vertex apparates across the world," Dumbledore said, "And I'm sure that in a few months he will be fully grown, but of course only bodily spiritually he will mirror you two"

"Hear that Harry you got to mature no more pranks!" Fleur said teasingly.

Dumbledore chuckled.

"I have a Portkey here for you; it will transport you to Beauxbaton and back. It is activated by the tap of a wand," Dumbledore said, "I trust you two to be careful and I want both of you to travel under your invisibility cloak in case the landing site is not safe."

"All right," Harry said, "Let us just get our bags and we're off."

"Accio bags," Fleur said lazily and waved her wand.

"Get my cloak too," Harry asked.

“Accio my masterpiece,” Fleur said and waved her wand again.

“Masterpiece?” Dumbledore asked curiously.

“Fleur made me a cloak for Christmas, sir,” Harry said proudly and caught his cloak when it came flying into the kitchens.

“Dear me, Graphorn hide,” Dumbledore said at once, “I got a veela cloak too somewhere in my wardrobe but it is only Swedish shortsnout.”

“You should wear it more often,” Fleur said matter-of-factly, “You dress well in blue.”

“That is what Velvet said as well,” Dumbledore chuckled.

Harry opened his bag and pulled out his invisibility cloak.

“You’ll have to stay with Ron and Hermione for a few days sweetie,” Fleur told their phoenix.

Vertex gave a sad questioning squeak.

“Don’t look at me like that,” Fleur said sadly, “We will be back before you know it.”

“Yes and we’ll bring you all the French herbs we can find,” Harry promised.

Vertex gave another sad tune and fluttered over to Hermione’s shoulder.

“You will find that your magic bond between you two and Vertex will be just as strong even if you are in France,” Dumbledore told them gently, “And you will in a way not be gone from each other at all.”

Fleur sighed and she exchanged a sad look with Harry. They both felt very bad leaving their baby phoenix behind even though Dumbledore’s words were of some comfort.

“Come on you’ll see each other in a few days and it’s not like we will take bad care of him,” Ron said happily.

Vertex gave a thrill as if telling Ron 'You better not!' but only Harry and Fleur interpreted it that way. It eased their mood tremendously.

"Is anyone expecting us besides my aunt?"

"Only the headmistress, Madam Maxime, she has taken certain precautions to make your stay as enjoyable as possible," Dumbledore said and Harry got a feeling that he was going to be greeted as some kind of hero. "I want you to promise me that you will not leave each other under any circumstances."

"We promise," Fleur promised for both of them.

"And don't leave the school," Mrs. Weasley added, "Heavens knows what could happen."

"We won't Mrs. Weasley," Harry promised.

"Excellent," Dumbledore said and flicked his wand. A CD appeared on the table.

"Is that the Portkey?" Fleur asked incredulously, "Isn't that a muggle thing?"

"Ingenious!" Arthur burst out when he realized it was a muggle made.

"It's a CD," Harry stated.

"Actually it's a DVD," Dumbledore said and Harry's mouth fell open he had never imagined Dumbledore even knowing what a DVD was. As far as Harry knew, DVDs had not even been introduced to the English market yet. In fact, the only reason Harry knew what a DVD was, was that Dudley had started nagging his parents for a player.

"A DVD but isn't that a little unnecessary sir?" Hermione asked, "Wouldn't anything much simpler do?"

"Indeed yes but I imagine death eaters will have trouble tampering or replacing this without your notice," Dumbledore said.

"Plastic," Mr. Weasley stated to himself eyeing the DVD carefully.



"But what if we scratch it?" Harry asked he knew that CDs was sensitive or at least his aunt had yelled at him every time he dusted his cousin's CD collection to be careful.

"Scratches are nothing that can't be fixed with magic," Dumbledore said, "Moreover I have already seen Fargo and will not miss it."

"Is it any good Professor?" Hermione asked in a very uncharacteristic behavior. It took Harry several moments to realize that Hermione must miss the muggle world immensely, she had hardly seen her parents in several years, and since the Fidelius charm she has not even been able to send them regular owls. Every message to them would have to be carried by Mrs. Weasley. Harry suspected that she might be the secret keeper but would not dream of even asking Hermione. Harry could not imagine how Hermione must be feeling but he knew it had to hurt a lot.

"Yes rather good actually," Dumbledore replied, "But then I've always enjoyed films. Nicholas Flamel and I have gone to the cinemas ever since they invented motion pictures."

Harry threw his father's old invisibility cloak over his and Fleur shoulders and Fleur picked up the DVD.

"See you in two days then," Harry said and covered himself and Fleur completely with the invisibility cloak.

Every one said their final goodbyes and Mrs. Weasley gave them several more warnings before Fleur tapped the Portkey with her wand and they were off.

As the tug behind his navel hocked him away, he held Fleur hard with his left arm so that they would not bang into each other as the swirled by the colors. He grabbed hold of the invisibility cloak with his right hand to make sure it didn't slip off them when they landed. But they didn't land, they continued to whirl through thousands of blurred colors. Some seemed to last for several seconds other flickered by like power poles outside a train window.

He had never been traveling with Portkey for this long unless you count his nightmares. His nightmares about the graveyard often

started when he grabbed any innocent object and then the dream would change to nightmare and after a long travel full of horrible expectations. Sometimes with his love ones others alone, he would find himself in the graveyard with Voldemort and Wormtail. His friends would be executed at arrival, if he was not alone. In the end of the dream, Voldemort would kill him, though the green flash always came as a relief.

Without realizing it, Harry suddenly expected the travel to end at that Graveyard and he pulled Fleur painfully close. He would not let Fleur die, Voldemort would have to kill him first. Unlike his dreams he felt ready to face Voldemort, he would draw his wand and fire every nasty curse he knew before Voldemort could even open his mouth to say 'Kill the spare'. With a sudden thud they landed and the colors dissolved, it was white.

So what do you think?

Oh yeah, Fargo is a good movie. See it sometime if you have an opportunity.

As I am writing this, I have **99** (Thanks!) reviews! Please make it **a hundred!**

## Chapter 27 Beauxbaton

Thanks to his tight grip on Fleur, they managed to keep standing without stumbling. Without thinking, he whipped out his wand but as he pointed his wand forward, he noticed that they were covered in his invisibility cloak.

Reality came flashing back to Harry and huge waves of relief washed over him so thoroughly that he felt tears rolling down his cheeks. He glanced around at his surroundings and saw that they were not entirely white; he was in fact looking at a snow-covered castle.

"What's wrong Harry?" Fleur asked, she could always tell when he was crying even without looking at him.

"I...I thought for a moment that we were going back to the Graveyard," Harry admitted breathlessly, "I kind of don't like traveling with Portkey especially long travels."

Fleur hugged him with both her arms and kissed him on his cheek, "It's all right I'm here."

"That's why I was scared I thought he might try and hurt you," Harry said and hugged her back, the powerful feeling that he always felt when he was close to Fleur flooded his body and he felt himself relax.

Fleur put the DVD in her robe pocket and wiped Harry's tears with her sleeve. "Welcome to Beauxbaton's Academy of Magic."

Fleur could also always tell when he was ready to go on. She started to walk up towards the castle and pulled Harry along.

"It's beautiful," Harry said after a glance at the castle, "Hogwarts is more imposing but not as beautiful."

"I know," Fleur said proudly, "And we should come here in the summer so I could show you the gardens."

Harry looked around at the garden and realized that it was much more impressive than Hogwarts's Rose garden even though it was covered with snow.

"Aren't we in southern France?" Harry asked abruptly, it seemed very unlikely that so much snow had fallen so far south.

"The snow is only a spell. It's prefect duty," Fleur explained as they reached the front doors.

"I think it's safe to slip out of the cloak now so that you can be greeted as a guest properly," Fleur said. "Don't look like that, Wingbeat, it's necessary you are one of the front figures in the war and people will want to believe in you."

"But I don't want peoples to believe in me, I haven't done anything!"

"You rather want them to believe in Voldemort?" Fleur asked softly, "Because I know he'll want them to believe in him."

Fleur was right of course but he had never thought of it in that way. He had a responsibility of representing their side in this war. He straitened himself up to his full length, pulled of the cloak and Fleur knocked on the doors with a wave of her wand. Harry just had time to put his invisibility cloak away before the front doors opened by Madam Maxime.

"Ah, Young Mr. Potter," Madam Maxime said and extended a huge hand which Harry shook, it was lucky perhaps that Harry was used to Hagrid's huge size otherwise he might have frozen.

"Fleur," Madam Maxime said and greeted her in French way with a hug and kisses. It was also very lucky that Hagrid didn't greet peoples like this because he was not by a long shot as gentle as Madam Maxime.

"You will have the top of the guest tower for yourself," Madam Maxime said and walked back into the Castle, Harry and Fleur following her.

"The view is fantastic from there," Fleur commented.

"I trust Fleur will give you a tour of the Beauxbaton" Maxime said, "And I hope you will join us for dinner."

"Yes of course," Fleur said and grabbed Harry's hand, "Come on I'll show you our room!"

Even though Beauxbaton was not nearly as old as Hogwarts there seemed to be just as much to say about every corridor and painting they passed as Fleur dragged him towards their room.

"The President stayed here when I was in my third year he's a muggle of course, he wanted to make sure that the magical world was real so he came here." Fleur explained and stopped in front of the door where the president had stayed, "And this is where we will stay!"

"Fleur Delacour and Harry Potter," Fleur told the door and it opened.

The most magnificent room Harry had ever seen lay in front of his eyes. The first thing he noticed was a huge panorama window in the far side of the room, quite unusual for castles but suiting for this room. The walls were covered in some kind of wood and lined with bookcases full of books. The floor was made of wood laid in the most extraordinary patterns, it had to be at least four different types of wood and several thick carpets covered huge parts of it. A huge couch and a table stood in the room in front of a huge fireplace that held a roaring fire. Harry took a step inside the room and looked up; thick wooden beams held up the cone that was the top of the tower it gave a robust yet elegant touch to the room.

"Wow!" Harry exclaimed taken aback, he had even dreamed of living this luxurious. In fact, he still had that Dursley gut feeling as if he was not allowed this, as if this was way too good for him.

"Knew you would like it!" Fleur said happily, "Wait till you see the bathroom, it's wonderful. Nancy and I usually celebrate our birthdays here."

Fleur pulled him along to show him the bathroom; it was in the same design as the prefects' bathroom but a little smaller and only made for two people at once while the prefects' bathroom was built to handle 12.

“Are you sure this is for us?” Harry asked, “I would have settled with a simple bedroom.”

Fleur pecked his cheek, “You deserve the best Harry.”

“I hope that’s not why you are with me.” Harry asked and realized how rude he had sounded, “Sorry Fleur didn’t mean it like that. Let’s go meet your aunt.”

“All right let’s just stash our stuff in the bedroom and we’ll be off,” said Fleur.

The bedroom was as magnificent as the two other rooms. It had the largest four-poster Harry had ever seen and in one corner of the room was another fireplace. They placed their bags on the bed and Fleur led their way down to Nancy Lyons office.

Fleur’s smile got wider and wider for every step that brought her closer to her aunt’s office, she was very happy to meet her aunt again. Harry felt a tangle of jealousy; he usually did when someone was happy to meet their relatives but that jealousy was quickly drowned by the fact that Fleur was happy. After all Fleur’s happiness mattered more than his own. Fleur stopped in front of a door and straitened her robes before she knocked.

The door flung open, a second later and a very beautiful woman stood there. She was like Fleur tall, silver blond, slender yet curvy in a goddess sort of way. Harry knew that she had to be about thirty-five, but didn’t look any older than thirty.

“Fleur!” Nancy exclaimed, threw her arms around her niece and started speaking in rapid French. Fleur answered with a string of equally rapid French.

Harry didn’t have to know French however to be able to tell what they said. It was obvious both of them said how much they had missed each other and asked how they had been. After what seemed like several minutes they broke their hug and wiped tears from their happy faces.

“And you must be Harry?” Nancy greeted him with a hug and a kiss on each cheek. Harry did the same it came natural because Fleur often greeted him that way when Tonks had been telling her that she needed to work on the kissing part of their relation ship.

“Nice too finally meet you Madam,” said Harry politely.

“I wish I could have welcomed you when you arrived but I hopped to finish the fireworks before you got here,” Nancy said, “And call me Nancy... come in I just have some ignition charms left to place.”

Fleur had told him Nancy was charms Professor and also that the Charms Professor was responsible for the New Year Eve’s fireworks.

“This is not dragon skin,” Nancy told Fleur after a glance at Harry’s cloak, “This is... is it green Graphorn hide? You finally managed a good coloring charm?”

“No,” Fleur admitted, “I had Flitwick do it for me.”

Nancy laughed, her laugh resembled Fleur’s very much. “It’s good you haven’t changed too much,” She said and pulled Harry inside by his shoulder, Fleur followed and closed the door after them.

“I met your parents, I don’t know if Fleur told you but I was an exchange student in my fifth year, they were in their sixth,” Nancy said as she started with the help of Fleur to place the final ignition charms on the fireworks that lay on Nancy’s desk.

“Your mother was very nice she was very interested in my school and she helped me with homework.”

Sirius, Remus or Hagrid had never really talked about his mother and the only things he knew about her was how she looked and that her first wand was made of willow and of course that she had been head girl and a Gryffindor. It was somehow strange how he could love and miss a woman so incredible much that he didn’t even remember.

“You knew her well?” Harry asked hopefully.

“Rather good but of course we never kept in touch... well we wrote each other for a couple of month after I came back, but then she fell in love with your father and that took most of her time,” Nancy said, “And I didn’t have exactly much spare time in those days either.”

“What was she like?” Fleur asked on Harry’s behalf. Harry flashed Fleur a thankful smile he didn’t feel like pressing Fleur’s aunt for information about his mother, it wasn’t the most polite thing to do right after they had met.

“Nice and caring a little bossy perhaps and very gifted with charms, just like your mother Fleur. She had a temper too, I remember once when she was yelling at Professor McGonagall I don’t know if she still teaches...” Fleur nodded a yes and Nancy continued, “It was about something Snivellus or what ever his name was, we all hated him, anyway he had done something and McGonagall didn’t punish him correctly or something.”

“She yelled at McGonagall? That is almost as bad as yelling at Dumbledore,” Harry stated without thinking.

“You didn’t,” Nancy said looking strait at Fleur, catching at once what Harry was getting at as if she had known him for years, “You did. Oh Fleur are you all right, why didn’t you tell me?”

Fleur smiled guiltily, “Of course I’m all right, it was month ago... and besides he’s used to veela temper, he knew Velvet.”

“He did? Well I can’t say I’m surprised everyone knows Dumbledore someway or another. He had me for tea a couple of times... well quite often actually I had a horrible temper back then and he usually helped me after my transformations.” Nancy said, and Harry understood that Nancy like Fleur was rather upset afterwards.

Harry smiled fondly he couldn’t help it. Nancy acted so much like Fleur and it was cute of them to think that anyone blamed them for being who they are. Especially Fleur, Harry thought, she had nothing to be ashamed of since she was very cute in her bird shape as well.

Nancy gave Harry a very dirty look as if he was making fun of her for being part veela.



This caused Harry to smile even wider even though he desperately tried not to, he just couldn't help himself. Nancy was just too much like Fleur.

"Do you find it funny?" Nancy asked him calmly though Harry knew that he was treading on dangerous grounds.

"Yes I do," Harry said it was the thing he could think of to not make matters worse, "You two are so stupid."

"Stupid?" Nancy asked in a deadly calm voice. Fleur seemed to sense danger too but didn't interfere, she knew Harry could handle the situation.

"You knew Remus Lupin?" Harry asked he knew from enough experience with Fleur what he had to say to make Nancy calm down.

"Yes I knew Remus very well," Nancy said uncertainly and Harry knew that he had successfully avoided Nancy's veela temper. "He was really nice and understanding when I transformed, but he didn't really like me. He turned rather nasty in the end, but that's males, one moment nice... sorry Harry I didn't mean everyone just those I tend to end up with."

Harry was surprised by Nancy's sudden frankness but he supposed that she said much more than she had intended. She seemed happy her temper hadn't gotten the better of her, at least that would be the reason if her mind worked similar to Fleur's.

"Did you kiss him?" Fleur giggled.

"Once or twice perhaps I don't really remember," Nancy said trying to shrug the topic off.

"Liar!" Fleur exclaimed, "You never forget any interesting details."

Nancy smiled an embarrassed sort of smile, "All right we kissed quite a lot for a while... do you have contact with him, why did you ask if I knew him?"

"Well we have contact with him, we celebrated Christmas with him. Anyway he thinks much less of himself as well," said Harry.

"Why would he do that?" Nancy asked and then added, "And I don't think any less of myself."

It was somewhat scary how well Harry felt he knew Nancy at once. "Yes you do after your transformations."

"Has Fleur told you about that?" Nancy asked and looked at Fleur accusingly.

"No, but you said that Remus was understanding and Dumbledore asked you for tea afterwards so I just figured you are like Fleur and I know her well," Harry said and glanced fondly over at Fleur.

"You are too much like your mother for your own good," Nancy said seriously but with a smile. To Harry that was the nicest thing anyone had ever said to him and had to look down on the floor so that they wouldn't see the emotions that that sentence caused him to feel.

"Thanks," Harry mumbled, "Every one says I'm like my father."

"No you're not!" Nancy exclaimed, "You don't even look like him, well you got the hair and cheekbone perhaps. Take off your eyeglasses."

Harry did as she said and Nancy looked at him carefully, "No one can deny that you are Lily's son, you have parts of her nose and her forehead and her eyes of course."

Harry smiled widely and looked up at Nancy gratefully.

"Anyway why would Remus think any less of himself?" Nancy asked pocketing her wand and sat down in her chair.

"Well he probably wouldn't like me to tell you but it's not a secret anymore," Harry said awkwardly.

"He's a werewolf," Fleur added.

“Oh no poor Remi,” Nancy said sympathetically, “Was he bitten recently?”

“No,” Harry stated shortly, he wondered for a moment if Nancy might be mad at Remus for not telling her what he was if they were close enough to kiss.

“He has been a werewolf for a long time,” said Fleur.

“When then, Right after Hogwarts?” Nancy asked looking over at Fleur for answers.

“While he was at Hogwarts?” Nancy added and then added in a whisper as Fleur’s expression didn’t change, “All along wasn’t he,” it was not a question.

Nancy sat speechless in her chair every now and then opening her mouth as if to say something and then closing it again as no words came out. Then her cheeks flushed and she looked very angry.

“You think you can just walk into my office and tell me that he was a werewolf all along just like that,” Nancy hissed dangerously.

Harry and Fleur both took a step back and instinctively held hands.

“By the way,” Nancy said sarcastically, “the boy you loved pushed you away because he was a werewolf and didn’t want to hurt you.”

“Please we had no idea,” Fleur pleaded.

“I thought all these years that Remus didn’t want to be with a PART HUMAN!” Nancy yelled angrily and started to sprout feathers, “I suppose you two thought just could pop in and fix us up again?”

“No please we are sorry we had no idea,” Fleur apologized urgently.

“Like I would believe that! You spent Christmas with him and then you and your stupid boyfriend comes here and tells me how to live my life!” Nancy said continuing to sprout her feathers and wings.

“Harry is not stupid!” Fleur defended through gritted teeth.

Harry didn't really realize when things started to go really bad but before he knew it he was hiding in a corner of the room while Fleur and Nancy were throwing fire at each other. Fortunately, veela had a natural resistance to fire and couldn't really harm each other too badly. They were shouting things in French at each other and Harry had a feeling that they brought up every disagreement they ever had.

Finally, Harry decided that he couldn't hide like this for one thing they would both feel very bad when this was over and they knew they had scared him. He hoped that the ministry wouldn't argue with him if he used magic, he was in a school after all.

"Ignisgelutus," Harry said firmly and waved his wand at himself, he hoped that the flame freezing charm would work with veela fire. He knew what he would have to do, he would have to grab hold of Fleur and hope that Nancy would turn back if Fleur did. With a few quick steps, Harry stood in front of Fleur blocking the fire they threw at each other with ease. Fleur managed to dodge his first attempt of catching her and whirled another fireball at Nancy.

He had never seen Fleur this far transformed before; she didn't seem to be human at all any more and he wouldn't even have believed it was Fleur had she not had her blue eyes. Harry made another lunge for her and caught her around the middle. Fleur fought him much harder than she had ever had before, she tried to scratch his back with her talons but since still had his cloak on he hardly noticed.

He held her so tight that he could feel her heart beating violently through all of their clothes. Fleur continued to fight him for a whole minute but to no avail. Harry was much stronger and had a firm grip on her.

"I'm so sorry you had to see that, Wingbeat," Fleur finally whispered.

"I love you too" Harry replied. He could tell that Nancy had transformed back as well since a fireball had not hit him in the back for quite some time.

"I should have warned you, this always happens when veela get together. It's just that I don't like to think of myself as a veela even though I am."

"You are not a veela, you are a part veela," Harry corrected.

"Not when it comes to fighting." Fleur said, looking away guiltily.

"You don't have to be a veela for that," Harry stated forcing her to look at him by turning her head with his hand, "I told you what I did to my dear aunt Marge."

"But that's the different she was horrible, Nancy isn't. Veela live in large groups and it's a natural of way of determining who the leader is just like wolves or lions. It's instinct, I just get so very angry and I can help it." Fleur explained sadly.

"So who's the leader?" Harry asked.

"Oh that's not it, we had our fight now our veela parts won't bother us again," Fleur said, "At least not for another year or something it's more often if you are a pure veela."

"I bet you would be the leader if you lived like a veela," Harry said fondly.

Fleur smiled at him.

"Are you two okay?" Nancy asked from across the room she had slumped down in her chair exhausted.

"Yeah," Fleur replied and Harry led go of her, settling with holding hands.

"I'm sorry if I burned any of you," Nancy apologized to both of them.

"No problem" Harry said smiling reassuringly.

"Good," Nancy said and smiled back, "Not many males do what you did."

"Well my first real friend was a bird and rather short tempered as well," Harry said to ease the mood, "Perhaps there is something with me that makes me like feisty birds."

"Now that's something you father would have said, though I never really knew him but he was hard not to hear," Nancy said, "I don't want to sound rude but I never understood what she saw in him, she was so much better than him."

"They say he matured a lot in his seventh year," Harry said.

"Yes I suppose, and he was faithful," Nancy said, "It was quite funny all the things he did to get her attention and then she would just say no anyway."

"Yeah," Harry said remembering his short trip down in Snape's memories.

"Oh it's dinner," Nancy said glancing over at a grandfather clock, "I'll tell you more about your mum over some food and a glass of wine."

The halls and corridors of Beauxbaton were very much like Hogwarts but instead of suits of armor, there were potted plants. The corridors were not quite as big and impressive and there was probably not half as many secret passages here. Moreover, Harry was certain that there was nothing even remotely like a Chamber of Secrets in this castle. It just didn't hold with the atmosphere. They turned a corner and almost ran into four girls in their early teens.

"Pardon Madam Lyon," One of the girls said and then took a step back as she realized that Fleur and Harry was there too.

"Fleur," The girl stated in a way of a greeting, though it sounded rather rude. The other three girls didn't even seem to notice Fleur or Nancy they were gawping at Harry's scar.

"Hello," Harry said hoping they knew enough English to reply, if they wanted.

"Are you 'Arrey Potter?" One of the girls managed.

"Yes," Harry stated and tried to smile as the-boy-who-lived was expected to. The four girls started chatting so rapidly in French that Harry doubted that even Fleur or Nancy could understand them.

“Apparently you are very cute and a bit taller then expected,” Fleur whispered in Harry’s ear, “And they never expected you too actually have emerald eyes,” The girls burst out in giggles, “humph... that would make you blush.”

“Even more you mean,” Harry muttered back, he already felt his cheeks burning.

“Can we ‘ave your autograph?” One of the girls asked holding out quill and parchment.

“Sure,” Harry replied swallowing his dislike for autographs bitterly, “Do you want one each?”

“Yes please!” The girl replied and Harry scribbled his name as neatly he could for times on the parchment.

“There you go,” Harry said and handed the quill and parchment back, “Now we must be off for dinner.”

“You are staying the night?” The girl asked eagerly.

“Yes,” Harry replied, normally he wouldn’t mind a polite conversation but the fact that they only noticed him because of his scare made him want to run so he fought extra hard to keep his smile on.

“Is Delacour your girlfriend?” The girl pressed on with out of a trace of embarrassment.

“Yes,” Harry said and decided to do the thing properly added, “And I love her very much.”

The four girls mumbled something and gave Fleur very dirty glares. Nancy must have caught some of it because she seemed to give them sort of punishment and they scattered.

“You did well,” Fleur commented, “I don’t think anyone of those will be death eaters.”

“All thanks to me,” Harry said sarcastically, “Why did you think I would blush anyway?”

"Nothing they just joked around like girls do they seemed to know you didn't understand French though," Fleur said.

"What did they say?" Harry pressed on.

"Well if you really want to find out whether you would blush or not," Fleur asked teasingly.

"If you didn't want me to know you shouldn't have said that I would blush," Harry stated firmly.

"All right then," Fleur said grinning widely, "They figured you were well experienced and probably the best male around for... well sins."

Harry blushed.

"I take that you don't want to hear the rest of it?" Fleur asked.

"No I rather not, besides I can imagine," said Harry.

"Got a dirty mind now saint Gryffindor?" Fleur teased.

Nancy cleared her throat; they had both completely forgotten that they were not alone as usual when they were teasing. Harry had never blushed so badly in his life. He could feel Fleur's veela powers radiating embarrassment he hoped that Nancy wouldn't notice them.

"I'm afraid we don't have an enchanted ceiling here in Beauxbaton," Nancy said breaking the very awkward silence.

"Oh," Harry said catching on to the offered subject, "But you do receive owls over breakfast?"

"Yes, but not so often we usually get our owls direct to our dormitories before breakfast," Fleur said.

Harry noticed that there were seven tables for students and one staff table placed as in Hogwarts in front of the others when he entered the great hall of Beauxbaton. He knew they didn't have houses so he supposed that each table were for each year though now all students sat along the middle table since most of them had gone home. At the



staff table sat Madam Maxime and the rest of the Beauxbaton staff chatting happily.

Nancy cleared her throat loudly and got Madam Maxime's attention. Harry groaned inwardly when Maxime stood up apparently ready to give a speech.

"Attention everyone!" Maxime said loudly, "We have over the New Year a very special guest may I introduce Mr. Harry Potter."

Silence fell so quickly at these words that it almost felt as if a Dementors had attacked. Harry searched after a happy memory to conjure a corporal smile, he settled for him looking like his mother, and managed a wide smile and to top it off he waved at the students. He hoped that they wouldn't think of him as some kind of Lockhart.

"Can I stop?" Harry hissed through his smiling mouth to Fleur.

Fleur giggled slightly, "Sure now follow us up to the staff table."

After several introductions to all of the teachers, Harry was directed to a chair by the younger part veela and sat down.

"Finally some real food," Fleur said hungrily and sat down next to him. "The house elves in Hogwarts are great but they just don't know what food is supposed to be like."

"Have you told them that?" Harry asked, knowing she hadn't.

"No are you crazy? I wouldn't get anything but bouillabaisse" Fleur exclaimed.

Harry did not agree with what Fleur thought of real food it was perhaps their greatest difference in personality, though they both liked the wine that was served.

"So what else can you tell me about my mum?" Harry asked he felt a little light headed due to the great tasting wine.

"What do you want to know?" Nancy replied.

“Anything I practically don’t know anything about her besides what you told me,” Harry admitted feeling very guilty that he hadn’t researched her more.

Nancy ate in silence for a minute before she opened her mouth, “I remember once when we were practicing the patronus charm. It was above our level but since we both were best in our years at charms, we thought it would be fun to see what shapes they took. We were having loads of fun and we were rather giggly because I had just kissed Remus for the first time.”

It was another couple seconds before Nancy continued, “She offered to put us in detention together if we wanted some privacy, she always played strictly by the rules except when it came to love. But she didn’t have to, Remus and his friends knew the school better than everyone else. Anyway we were giggling a lot and I used the memory of me kissing Remus and managed a unicorn, the same as Fleur’s. Your mum tried loads of happy memories, the fact that she was a witch, her being made a prefect and her friends. Lily was a happy girl, so she had trouble settling for the happiest memory. She wouldn’t tell me what her happy memory was when she finally managed to conjure her patronus but she made me promise never to tell anyone what shape it was, I never figured out why it had to be such a secret but she did seem very embarrassed about it.”

Harry sat staring with a stupid grin on his face.

“I suppose you don’t have any idea of why she would be embarrassed about a deer?” Nancy asked.

Fleur burst out giggling, “She already loved him!”

“Who?” Nancy asked taking a sip of wine.

“Lily. She already loved James!” Fleur replied, “James, Sirius and that Peter became animagi to keep Remus company when it was full moon.”

“But that’s dangerous!” Nancy exclaimed, “They could have died all of them! The animagi transformation is very dangerous.”

"They did anyway didn't they?" Harry asked sadly.

There was an awkward silence that Fleur broke after a few moments, "Well anyway Harry has the same patronus as Lily and that is because it's James's animagus form."

They spent the rest of the evening in Harry and Fleur's room talking in front of the huge blazing fire about what had happened to Sirius and Pettigrew they also carefully mentioned that Remus has been very lonely ever since Sirius died. Nancy left them around midnight and Harry and Fleur remained sitting in the couch. Fleur crawled over to him and lay down in his arms; Harry leaned back and closed his eyes.

"Can you feel it?" Fleur asked.

"Yeah, he's lonely," Harry replied.

"We have to ask the house elves for herbs or perhaps we can buy some from Madam Pedone she's the care of magical creature teacher," Fleur said tiredly and yawned.

"We forgot to mention Vertex," Harry said, "Nancy will be proud."

"She's the best without her I would probably be another slut in Paris with a horrible job and loads of horrible lovers that only liked me for the way I looked," Fleur said as she slowly started drifting off to sleep.

"I bet you could get a really nice guy that only loved you for the way you look," Harry joked sleepily. He could tell that Fleur smiled but was too tired to come up with a reply.

Harry felt the fire radiating warmth, he could feel Fleur's slow, even breathing and somewhere in his mind he felt the presence of Vertex. He thought briefly of all the new stuff he had found out about his mum and felt a smile creeping over his face as he fell into peaceful sleep.

A veela fight, isn't that wonderful?

## Chapter 28 Awkward

"Wake up Wingbeat," Fleur woke him softly, "It's snowing and I haven't been out in days!"

"I dreamed you were an angel undercover," Harry mumbled sleepily.

"It took you until now to discover that?" Fleur teased but then seemed to change her mind and added, "You are so sweet, now hurry up and we'll go down for breakfast."

After some quick morning preparations, a change of robes and a quick walk through the castle they reached the great hall. Unlike yesterday dinner the students of Beauxbaton wasn't stunned to see him.

"Harry Potter!" One of the girls that had asked for his autograph the day before called from the middle table where about twenty French students sat eating breakfast, "Sit with us!"

Before Harry could refuse, Fleur pulled him over to the middle table and sat down. The students seemed quite surprised by having the-boy-who-lived joining them for breakfast.

"Hello," Harry said jerkily.

"Hello Harry," The girl who had asked him to sit said and the other followed her lead and mumbled their greetings or nodded curtly.

"We were all wondering if you enjoy your stay." A girl of his age with brown hair and eyes asked.

"Yes, the guest tower is really nice," Harry said politely and Fleur handed him a buttered toast, which he ate. The girl glared at Fleur for feeding Harry.

"If you ever get bored you could just drop in our dormitory," The girl pressed on, "It's not as nice as the guest tower but I could make it very comfortable for you."

Harry didn't know what to reply, he was lost for words. No one had ever flirted this obviously with him before.

"I'm afraid Harry's a little tired, he didn't catch much sleep last night," Fleur lied and kissed him lovingly on his cheek.

"Harry's a big boy he can make up his mind by himself can't you Harry?" The brunet asked.

Harry pretended not to hear. He pretended to be caught up with Fleur kissing him on his cheek and caught her mouth in a real kiss. The brown haired girl seemed to sense her defeat and returned to her breakfast muttering something French under her breath.

"So what is Hogwarts like?" A boy that seemed to be a little younger than Harry asked.

"It's great," Harry said happily, "It's mostly like Beauxbaton, but much older and a bit rougher."

"Is it true there were a Basilisk there?" A blonde girl next to the boy asked she appeared to his girlfriend because of the way they sat close to each other.

"Yes," Harry replied shortly.

"A real basilisk... that could kill by looking at you?" The boy asked.

"Yes," Fleur answered for him, "But no one died for over fifty years."

"Is it true that you killed it?" The brunet asked.

"Not alone," said Harry quickly, "I had help."

"Wazz it your old girlfriend zhe who dumped you for Krum?" Another girl from down the table asked.

"No," Harry replied, "And she never was mine or Krum's girlfriend that's just what they wrote."

"Was it Albus Dumbledore then?" The boy asked.

"No, his Phoenix, Fawkes helped me," Harry said awkwardly. "He punctured the eyes of the Basilisk and I killed it with a sword."

"Why didn't you just use your wand?" The boy's girlfriend asked.

"I had lost it," Harry replied shortly and finished his toast. He spent the rest of the breakfast confirming or refuting rumours. Some were quite hilarious other downright sad like the one about his parents being alive and just in hiding.

"We got a dark lord to defeat before lunch so if you'll excuse us," Fleur finally said to Harry's big relief.

"Oh, well if you ever need any help?" The boy who turned out to be named Andre said.

"Thanks," Harry said solemnly, "It's good to know, Andre."

"Now you're a hero in Beauxbaton as well," Fleur said on their way out from the castle.

"I'm not a hero, just a bit famous and I happen to, by a huge coincidence, end up representing something."

"You are my hero," Fleur stated quietly, "You know that Wingbeat don't you?"

They walked in silence towards the front doors and Fleur opened one of them to let them out. It was snowing and it was freezing. Harry pulled his cloak closer around him and buttoned the top buttons.

"Accio warmth potion," Harry cried as he remembered that he had packed the potion he made the final lesson with Snape. Fleur closed the door again at the sound of his voice.

"Warmth potion?" She asked.

"Yeah, apparently it's a Hogwarts tradition for the new NEWT class to make Warmth potions for the Christmas holyday," Harry explained, "And don't look at me like that mine looked exactly like Hermione's so it's wont poison you."

“Well if it looked like Hermione’s,” Fleur said teasingly.

“Conjure a glass,” Harry said when the vial with his warmth potion came floating through the air towards them.

Harry caught the vial easy and poured one fourth of it in Fleur’s glass and when she had drunk it he poured him self equally much. It was unusually well tasting for a potion he had brewed. It tasted a little like Pepperup potion and Harry supposed they must work in similar ways. No smoke were coming out of their ears however and their faces kept their normal colors.

“You are good at potions no wonder you have an O,” said Fleur.

“I suppose,” Harry replied, he had never thought of himself as good at potions especially as he often partnered with Hermione.

Fleur pushed open a front door again but this time Harry didn’t notice the chill. They walked outside; snow was falling thickly from the grey sky.

“I thought you said the snow was charmed?” Harry asked as they walked down the stairs.

“It is, but it does snow sometimes by it self anyway,” Fleur replied and started to run in order to stretch her legs properly.

Harry followed her but couldn’t resist the temptation of scoping up some snow and forming a snow ball. He had expected his hands to sting with cold but they didn’t the snow felt as if it was wet cotton.

“You bastard!” Fleur shrieked when his snowball hit her in the back of her head and started to slip down inside her robes.

“Get me if you...” Harry stopped abruptly as a snowball from Fleur hit him the face.

“You were saying?” Fleur asked.

“You’re dead veela!” Harry yelled happily, scoped up some more snow and threw another snowball at Fleur. She shrieked in joy and

managed to dodge it. The snow fight continued mercilessly for an hour until their warmth potions started to wear off and they became aware of how wet they were

"We'll be freezing in a few minutes," Fleur stated, they were both laying down in the snow next to each other, exhausted.

"We better get inside," Harry replied and got up.

"Carry me," Fleur begged she was not as fit as him since he usually trained regularly on the Quidditch team.

"Mobilicorpus," Harry said and waved his wand at Fleur.

"No not like that! Let me down!" Fleur said and started to twist in the air as if trying to reach the ground, which was quite impossible unless you broke the spell.

Harry chuckled, "What's the matter angel? Lost your wings?"

"You are so totally dead," Fleur said, she looked as if she wanted to sprout her wings for once but couldn't manage as she wasn't really angry.

"Hold still and I'll carry you," Harry said and placed his arms under her.

"You are feather light you know," Harry teased when Fleur stopped struggling and held on to Harry instead.

"I weight as much as you do!" Fleur replied, "Probably more."

"Are you calling me skinny?" Harry said as he carried her back to the castle, "Or are you just admitting how fat you really are?"

"Your opinion means very much to me Harry," Fleur said seriously but Harry knew she was joking or teasing him somehow but decided to play along, "And if you think I'm fat I'll stop eating."



"You little devil!" Harry said and tossed her into the air, the Mobilius charm allowed her to float 20 feet up in the air before she slowly started to drift down.

Fleur shrieked, "All right I'm sorry I'm sorry don't do that again I admit I was teasing you and I won't stop eating!"

"That's better," Harry said and caught her in his arms.

"You are awful," Fleur said happily when she adjusted herself so that she could look up at him from his arms, "But I love you anyway."

Harry carried her all the way up to their tower fortunately they didn't see a single soul on their way up. Even though he was not too embarrassed showing everyone how much he loved Fleur, carrying her would be a little too much not to mention silly.

"I'm freezing," Harry said after he had lifted his Mobilicorpus off Fleur, "And I'm wet."

"I think I will have a bath," Both of them chorused.

Dead silence filled the room, Harry knew that they knew each other well enough to take a bath together, naked, but the fact that they very rarely kissed and were intimate made every thing very awkward.

"The bathroom is big enough for both of us," Fleur said trying to reason with the situation.

"Yeah," Harry agreed. Why did it have to be so difficult? Why couldn't he and Fleur just love each other like mad in every possible way?

"I could transfigure swimwear," said Fleur uncertainly, "Not that I would mind if you saw me naked."

"Me neither... I mean you seeing me naked," Harry replied equally uncertainly.

Neither Fleur nor Harry said anything for a long moment. Harry tried desperately to make out his feeling but the only conclusion he came to was that he loved Fleur. Even if it was true that he and Fleur didn't

love each other sexually it was not something that either of wanted to be reminded of and not taking a bath together would prove it.

“It’s just a stupid bath” Harry said irritably, walked determinedly in to the bathroom and started to undress.

Fleur entered the room shortly after but Harry didn’t look at her so he couldn’t tell if she was looking at him. Once Harry was naked he walked up to the huge tub in the middle of the room and turned several taps on. The taps worked very much like the taps in the prefects’ bathroom, several different kinds of bubbles came out of them and through the largest came warm water.

Harry blushing just slightly turned and saw Fleur naked as well at the other side of the tub. Their eyes locked for a short moment and he knew Fleur was as awkward as him with the entire situation. Harry slipped into the warm water and shortly after Fleur did the same.

“This is the most awkward situation I’ve ever been in,” Harry admitted to break the silence.

Fleur nodded, “Me too,” she sighed.

Harry turned the taps off when the tub was full of water and bubbles. It made the situation a little easier by the fact that neither of them could see each other bodies. The thing that made the situation so extremely awkward was that any couple that had been so close for so long should do more then just holding hands. Harry knew that he should want nothing more then to see Fleur naked but so was not the case. It hurt him badly, almost physically, to just look at Fleur and feel nothing.

Fleur suddenly pierced him with her deep blue eyes and blasted him with her veela charm. Harry realized that she must have decided just getting the awkwardness over with but then just as suddenly her gaze wavered from his and she looked down in the foam. Harry wasn’t disappointed it only hurt him more to see her use her veela charm to no effect.

Fleur sighed again.

Harry knew he had to do something. He edged over next to Fleur and found her hand under the water.

"We're just not ready, after all it's a big step," Harry said though he doubted at the moment that he ever would be ready.

Fleur smiled at him and pecked his cheek gently, "I love you. Don't forget that just because nothing happened."

"I love you too," Harry said and put his arm around her shoulder, they sat in silence for a long moment enjoying the warm water and the closeness.

"Do you think you will continue teaching next school year?" Harry finally asked it had just occurred to him that Hogwarts would be very lonely if Fleur left after the year just like all the rest of the Defense against the dark art teachers.

"Nothing can keep me from you," Fleur replied and added dreamily, "Wingbeat."

"I still haven't figured out why you keep calling me that?" Harry asked.

"I told you don't you remember I used to call you Wing-ban but that didn't really suit you," Fleur explained.

"That's the only reason?" Harry asked, he had always sensed that there was something more too it.

"When I was nine and had my first transformation... it was over as stupid thing I was in a bad mood and my parents wanted me to go to Paris with them, they had tickets to a Quidditch match. I wanted to be annoying so I refused to go with them I don't really remember why but I got so mad and then I sprouted feathers and wings. Mum and dad were shocked at first but then dad calmed me down. They both know of course that I would do that someday... anyway when I was calm again dad ensured me that it was a normal part of having a veela grandmother but I already knew that. Mum and her relatives usually turned into birds and you can imagine having ten veela trying to flame each other," Fleur smiled when she told him about her relatives, "I had this stuffed animal that I usually liked to hug after my

transformations when I was little, dad used to call it... well Wing-ban in English."

Harry smiled, "I wish I knew you since you were born... well at least since I was born."

"Me too, we'll just have to make up for those years, won't we?" Fleur asked looking up at him.

"Yeah that's a..." Harry stopped abruptly when Fleur put a sling of wet hair behind her ear.

"Show me your other wrist!" He demanded harshly. Fleur startled and held up both her wrists over the water.

"Where is it?" Harry asked trying to keep his calm.

"What?" Fleur asked uncertainly, she looked scared.

"The bracelet!" Harry practically yelled, "You promised never to take it off!"

"I didn't want it to get wet," Fleur said apologetically in a very small voice.

"Are you," Harry cursed, "stupid? Where is it... ACCIO Silver Bracelet!"

The silver bracelet came flying from Fleur's pile of clothes. Harry caught it angrily.

"Never take it off again!" Harry said forcefully, "Under any circumstances."

"I won't," Fleur said and put it around her wrist again, "Care to tell me why this is so important?"

"No," Harry snapped. Fleur and Harry sat next to each other for another long moment now however they didn't touch each other. Harry could tell that he had hurt Fleur's feelings and he knew that he had to apologize.

"I'm sorry I got angry," Harry said.

"You are going to have to do a lot better than that," Fleur said coolly, apparently she had been building up her anger in silence.

"What do you want me to say?" Harry asked irritably, "I'm so very, very sorry I lost my temper."

"What about a good reason?"

"You promised," Harry said, though he knew Fleur wanted a better reason than that.

"Not impressed," Fleur stated and crossed her arms over her chest the way she usually did when someone behaved badly, especially in class.

"How about it was really expensive?" Harry tried knowing it wouldn't work.

"Nice try but you told me it wasn't too expensive."

"It wasn't too expensive nothing is too expensive when it comes to you," Harry said and he could see Fleur soften.

"How much did it cost then?"

"Will you forgive me if I answer?"

"Sure," Fleur said though she didn't sound entirely honest.

"Five thousand Galleons," Harry muttered quietly.

"Very funny Harry," Fleur said sarcastically, "But no one buys a silver bracelet for that kind of money, I doubt any one would even try and sell it for that price."

"So do you forgive me?" Harry asked stubbornly.

"No I don't believe you," Fleur stated coolly, "Tell me why you paid five thousand galleons for it and I might believe you."

"No," Harry said shortly, he felt his temper rise again and was not so keen of having Fleur forgiving him yet.

“Fine,” Fleur replied and drifted over to the other side of the tub.

“It got a rather advanced charm on it,” Harry said giving in a little, “And I don’t know what exactly the charm does alright?”

Fleur didn’t reply she just glared sadly at him.

“Right it got the most advanced charm on it money can buy,” Harry admitted.

Still no reply just the sad glare.

“Fine,” Harry replied and stood up not even thinking of the fact that he was naked, “I don’t have to take this!”

With a few quick strides he was over at the shelf where the towels were placed. He pulled out a huge white towel and wrapped it around him self.

“Give me a reason,” Fleur said also standing up.

“Like what?” Harry asked.

“A reason to why you won’t tell me,” Fleur said walking over to him, she pulled out a towel for herself and wrapped it around herself.

“You might do stupid things if you knew, things I can’t allow.”

“But if I promise to be a good girl,” Fleur pleaded innocently changing tactics.

Harry hugged her, “Please I beg you let it go,” he whispered urgently in her ear.

“When can you tell me?” Fleur asked she was not angry any more.

“I’ll let you know as soon as it’s safe, I promise.”

“Do you always bring your wand when you take baths with girls or is it just because I’m part veela?” Fleur asked flaring him a radiant smile, apparently forgiving him.

"If I ever take a bath with another girl and don't bring my wand I'll let you know," Harry promised. He knew he was being a little paranoid bringing his wand with him, but he couldn't help it.

"What about that time Myrtle caught you working on that egg?" Fleur asked teasingly.

"Well technically she was never in the bath with me, she just watched me," Harry replied.

"Hmm," Fleur snorted playfully, "You are closer to a ghost than to me?"

"We have known each other longer than I have known you," Harry joked, "Let's go sit in front of the fire and dry up."

Harry caught several glimpses of Fleur's naked body and she probably saw him too. Fleur was beautiful from head to toe, perfect in everyway and Harry once more got the feeling that he had been damaged somehow.

After all, he did have a connection to Voldemort and that couldn't be too healthy neither surviving the killing curse not to mention growing up with the Dursleys in fact he should have some mental problems. Perhaps he should go and see Madam Pomfrey when he got back to Hogwarts.

They sat down in front of the blazing fire on the floor without saying a word.

"I'm getting dressed," Fleur said after a long moment and threw her towel at Harry, "Throw it in the bathroom for me will you?"

A few minutes later he entered the bedroom to find a fresh set of robes, he didn't even glance over at Fleur but judging by the sound she was sitting over by the mirror brushing her long silver hair.

When he was properly dressed it was high time to get some lunch. They ate their lunch at the staff table with Nancy. Nancy had spent the entire morning setting up tonight's fireworks. It would be spectacular Nancy promised.

"We got a really unusual Christmas gift by Dumbledore by the way," Fleur said on the way up to Nancy's office.

"Oh, something nice?" Nancy asked them.

Harry nodded.

"A phoenix feather," Fleur said, "From his Phoenix."

Nancy didn't reply she just gave them a blank look that said very clearly 'Explain'.

"You see Fawkes had wet it with a tear," Harry said.

"And Harry forged it," Fleur added.

"Why don't I get the feeling you aren't joking?" Nancy asked she had stopped in the middle of a corridor and eyed them suspiciously. You could tell that she was twice as much veela as Fleur was because of the bird like way she was watching them; of course, this didn't make her any less attractive.

"We named it Vertex," Harry stated, "We forged it together."

"You managed to forge a phoenix?" Nancy asked almost accusingly.

Fleur and Harry nodded.

"But that's impossible!" Nancy said, "Only really powerful wizards... not that you aren't powerful but... did Dumbledore help you?"

"No," Harry and Fleur answered.

"At least I don't think so," Fleur added.

"He wouldn't, not without telling us," said Harry.

"No," Fleur agreed, "Besides I don't see how he technically could."

"Of course I should have known you two would work miracles together," Nancy said smiling fondly at them. "You are after all



probably two of the most powerful sorcerers of your age since both of you are tri wizard champions.”

“Harry perhaps but I never did anything extraordinary,” Fleur said.

“What did I do?” Harry asked as if Fleur was insulting him.

“You conjured your stag in your third year and then you forged a phoenix,” Fleur said, “Not to mention you dueling with Snape or that forest incident.”

“That was luck,” Harry said irritably, “Besides you are a Professor, one of the youngest to ever teach at Hogwarts.”

“I can see that is a touch subject,” Nancy said sternly, “Let’s not discuss the topic further.”

“Sorry,” Fleur and Harry muttered at once and they started walking towards Nancy’s office again.

“I have some stuff that I thought you might be wanting,” Nancy said to Fleur when they entered her office. “Most of it is left in the house and when you are ready we can go there.”

Fleur froze; it was obvious what Nancy was talking about.

“Of course it can wait...”

“No it’s okay,” Fleur said and Harry grabbed her hand to show his support.

Nancy nodded though she didn’t look like if she was really ready for this. “I put it all in this box.”

Nancy gestured to a box standing on her desk, “The things they had with them.”

Fleur stepped over towards the box on the desk Harry following her. There was not many objects in the box just a wizards watch, a pair of eyeglasses and a wallet that Harry supposed must have belonged to

Fleur's father, a little diary with hearts on probably Gabrielle's and a fashionable purse no doubt Fleur's mother's.

"Stupid stuff," She muttered tears rolling down her cheeks.

"It's okay Angel," Harry murmured putting an arm around her waste.

Fleur didn't look like she knew what to do or feel. Finally, though she opened her mouth "This is Gabrielle's diary. She never wrote in it she used it to draw. She was a rather good drawer for here age, she specialised in girls with wings. She was after all a girl with wings herself she was proud of it too. She wanted to be exactly like me she had no idea the wings would be inconvenient one day and I didn't have heart to tell her I didn't like mine."

"Don't say that," Harry whispered, "I wouldn't want you any other way."

Fleur glanced at him sadly, "This was my fathers watch mum gave it to him a couple of years ago. He only liked it because she gave it to him. His old walled he's had this one since he left school he got it from his parents." Fleur said and opened her father's wallet. A magical photograph featuring the Delacours with Hogwarts in the background was tucked inside

"It was taken right before third task... I was so nervous... Look I'm trying to hid behind them," Fleur exclaimed. Her photo self was trying to hid behind her father but her father simply hugged her reassuringly, "They were so proud and Gabrielle had told all her friends about me being a brave tri wizard champion."

Fleur closed the walled with a sad sigh and put it back into the box. She picket the eyeglasses next, "Dad only used them when he was reading I think he once got hit by a fireball and lost some eye sight... not one of mum's she never threw fire at him at least not since after I was born."

She replaced the eyeglasses carefully and picked up the purse.

"This must have been her latest, I have never seen it before but she always made purses and robes too as a matter of fact," Fleur explained and opened the purse gently.

"Burn potions," Fleur stated and lifted out several vials and placed them in the box, "though I don't think she minded being a veela not as long dad loved her... tissues of course... a quill and some parchment."

She placed all the items she found in the purse in the box.

"And her wand," Fleur said and picked up the last item a wand she held the wand gently and placed it against her cheek and smelled it as if it was her mum.

"It still smells of her," Fleur said thoughtfully, "It's her second wand I think I broke her first wand when I was little... at least I have a vague memory of breaking it. Mum said I hadn't when I asked her about it a few years ago but she didn't sound too convincing. She probably just didn't want me feeling guilty about it."

"But aren't wands very hard to break?" Harry asked.

"Yeah I know but I remember it breaking and the veela hair poking out" Fleur said smiling sadly, "It must have been one of my earliest memories. I must have been two or perhaps three. It's Ash and Dragon Heart String."

"Oh, but why didn't she get one with veela hair?" Harry asked.

"She was in London at the time," Nancy explained, she had been reading a book near her fireplace but apparently was not too occupied.

"She was?" Fleur asked glancing over at her aunt, "I don't remember being to England before the Tri Wizard Championship."

"Wasn't that dangerous?" Harry blurted out before Nancy could answer, "Being in England back then?"

"It was," Nancy said shortly, "But they said it was important and besides it wasn't much better anywhere in Europe."

"Well now I know why she got it from Ollivander's," Fleur stated and started putting everything back into her mother's purse including the other things that were in the box.

"Fleur darling, when do you want to go and sort out the rest?" Nancy asked carefully.

"I don't want to," Fleur refused blankly, "Everything's fine the way it is!"

Nancy didn't push the matter instead they talked about Hogwarts and the dueling club. Nancy told them some funny stories from her school days some from Hogwarts others from Beauxbaton. After a few hours of talking, the conversation returned to Vertex and Nancy called on the house elves to get them herbs to bring back.

Before they knew it, it was time for the New Years Eve feast. Fleur charmed Harry's old Dress Robe from fourth year to fit him and he didn't look too bad in it, especially as he had almost never worn it and it still looked kind of new.

Unlike Hogwarts, New Years Eve in Beauxbaton was a big thing, every student and teacher dressed up and had a very fancy dinner. The seven long tables were replaced by a couple of round tables in one side of the hall but Harry wouldn't sit at any of those he would of course sit at the staff table. Apparently ordering your meal directly of the plate as Harry had done at the Yule ball was something of a standard in the Wizarding world because no one seemed unsure of what to do when the menus suddenly appeared.

"I can order for you if you like?" Fleur said reading his puzzled expression when he looked at the menu.

"Nothing too French," Harry replied, hoping there was such thing on the menu.

A few minutes later Harry was eating pasta. It was very good to say the very least, house elves seemed to have a natural ability to make

things taste good. They drank very good wine to the food and it made everything taste even better.

He had a polite conversation with the headmistress about Hogwarts, Dumbledore and Hagrid. Harry suspected that she was an order member because she seemed to know a lot of stuff she wouldn't know otherwise. When everyone was done with dinner, Madam Maxime announced a dance.

For those of you here who wants a little more action I recommend reading [my latest](#) fic. Story ID : **1563049** be warned it makes use of the **R** rating... First chapter is called "**Hermione Granger**" by the way.

Hmmm so what do you think of this chapter... any guesses yet how this might end? It's only nine chapters left after all.

## **Chapter 29 Across The World**

“Surprise,” said Fleur teasingly, she had not mentioned that there was a dance.

“Lovely,” Harry muttered sarcastically, he hated dancing. It would have been another thing if he had been good at it and didn’t make a complete fool out of himself.

“Well prince charming aren’t you going to ask me?” Fleur asked innocently.

“I’m going to marry Luna,” Harry stated gloomily.

“Why Miss Lovegood?” asked Fleur raising one eyebrow.

“She doesn’t enjoy dancing much,” Harry replied.

“Not to put pressure on you Potter,” said Fleur jokingly, “But if you don’t dance with me chances are pretty good you’ll have to dance with another girl.”

Harry glanced nervously over to the round tables, “Right,” He said and gulped down the rest of his wine.

“But you have to ask me first, it’s just the way it works,” Fleur complained when Harry tried to pull her up from her stool.

“You would do me a great honour if you would dance with me Miss Delacour,” Harry said playing along with her but couldn’t help adding, “Will that do?”

“That will hold me for two dances,” Fleur replied happily and got up. The first song was slow and Harry held Fleur close.

“You are supposed to lead,” Fleur informed him quietly. Fortunately, they were not opening the dance, Nancy and several other professors were dancing as well as some students.

“Don’t lead then,” Harry whispered back.

Fleur giggled, “If I don’t lead we’ll stand still!”

"What's wrong with that?" Harry asked though he did make an effort to lead.

Dancing with Fleur wasn't too bad. He knew her well enough to match her motions and actually dance with her. They were probably not the most gracious couple but definitely not the worst.

"This isn't so bad is it?" Fleur asked leaning her head on his shoulder.

"No," Harry agreed leaning into her, "You are a good dancer and you let me lead."

"What's your promise?" Fleur whispered.

"Mmm...? Oh well don't laugh," said Harry.

"I won't," Fleur promised.

"To not let anyone of us die, not Tonks, not Selena, not Ron, not Ginny, not Hermione and not you... no matter what," Harry said, he knew it was a silly thing to promise but not doing so would feel worse.

Fleur was silent for a moment before she spoke, "What about you?"

"Oh, well I suppose," Harry said though he would rather die then let anyone of his friends and family die.

"Good," Fleur commanded, "Say it!"

"Later it's not New Year yet," Harry replied and spun her around hoping to make her forget about it to be sure he added, "Now tell me what's your promise?"

"Make you see sense!" Fleur snapped irritably, she knew apparently that he didn't intend to promise not to die, "Either both of us goes or no one."

Harry didn't reply.

"It's true you got a hero thing going, who do you think you are, do you think you have the right to die instead of anyone else?" Fleur asked she was angry.

"I do what I want with my life," Harry retorted.

"No, you bloody well do not!" Fleur spat back, "You do what I want! Or I'll do horrible stuff!"

"Fine, both of us or no one," Harry agreed. It was a strange conversation, but Harry figured that both of them had lost too much and being left alone would be devastating.

Their anger faded as quickly as it had come and they enjoyed the dance.

"Oh I like this song," Fleur informed him happily when the next song begun.

"Now you are leading again," Harry complained playfully.

"No I'm not, I'm just moving faster than you," Fleur replied teasingly.

"That's leading," Harry informed her.

"Don't move so slowly then," Fleur replied and made Harry spin her around.

"What's wrong with leading slowly?"

"Nothing if it's a slow song. This is not a slow song. If you were to lead we would be off beat," Fleur replied dancing with him as if he was a rag doll.

"Well then can you lead at least so that it looks like I'm leading?"

"Oh no if you are embarrassed about not leading that's your problem," teased Fleur.

"Fine," Harry said and made his best to lead instead.

"I can get you to do anything you know," said Fleur, smiling mischievously.

"And don't you abuse it!" Harry replied making Fleur giggle.



When the song was over, they separated.

"That's the two songs I promised," Fleur said smiling widely.

"As if you would let me dance with somebody else," Harry replied.

"Excuse me Mr Potter but could I have the next dance," The brown-haired girl that had flirted with him during breakfast asked.

Harry glanced desperately at Fleur for help, but it was obvious that Fleur wouldn't help him. A mischievous smile crossed her lips and Harry knew that Fleur would let him dance with somebody else.

"Go right ahead I'll go and get us drinks," said Fleur and flung his hand she was still holding around the other girl's waist.

"Right," Harry said as he didn't have any hopes of escape. Fleur walked off and left them alone.

"I'm Renee," The girl said and flashed him a nervous smile. She didn't seem at all as confident now that she was alone with him in fact she seemed scared.

"I'm Harry," Harry replied jokingly.

"Nice to meet you Harry," Renee said politely. The music started again and to Harry's utmost horror it was a slow song.

"So," Renee said swaying slowly in Harry's arms, "How's life like when you are famous?"

"Well," Harry answered awkwardly, "Like normal I guess except that everyone knows your name and if you do anything they write about it."

"Do you like it?" Renee asked glancing down on the collar of his dress robe.

"No, not much," Harry replied.

"I guess it must be hard with Voldemort around too?"

"You said Voldemort's name," Harry stated mildly impressed.

"I'm muggle-born," Renee explained, "If he is going to try and kill us I'm going to say his name."

Harry suddenly realised that he had misjudged this girl completely, he had taken her for a giggly girl with too much hormones for her own good but she wasn't she was brave.

"How come you flirted with me earlier?" Harry burst out before he could stop himself.

"Oh that," Renee said blushing slightly, "I just did that to annoy your girlfriend."

"Oh, why is that?" Harry asked.

"It's not exactly easy if you got a crush on someone and all he does is to goggle at another girl," Renee said truthfully, "She even make her own clothes to get even more attention you know."

"She didn't do that to get attention, it's what veela do. It's tradition," Harry said defensively.

"So is seducing boys," Renee said defiantly, "She's good at that too."

"And why is that?" Harry asked he had half made up his mind to just leave Renee and find Fleur.

"She got you didn't she?" Renee asked simply, "Lets not talk about your girlfriend lets talk about something fun."

"Sure," Harry said relieved at the change of subject.

"Well... I have been thinking of studying at Hogwarts next year... my sixth year," Renee said, "Me and Elisa... don't flatter yourself I've always wanted to study abroad mum did, but in a muggle school."

"Hogwarts is a great school," Harry stated.

"You think they won't mind two extra students because we have no one to transfer with?"

"I don't know we don't get that many transfer students but I suppose it would be all right. I can't see why not."

They danced in silence for a minute, Harry lead the dance.

"Is Hogwarts very different?" She asked suddenly-

"Yeah in a way we are sorted into houses," Harry explained, "So it's not sure you and your friend... Elisa would be room mates."

"I know that," Renee said, "We do learn stuff here as well you know, so what house do you think I will be in?"

"Well, I don't know do you have good grades?" Harry asked swaying her gently.

"They are okay but I don't think I would fit in Ravenclaw," Renee said thoughtfully, "Probably Hufflepuff or Gryffindor if I'm brave enough"

"I think you would do a great Gryffindor," Harry said and at the same time wondered why he had said that it almost sounded as if he was flirting with her.

Renee giggled, "Do you think the sorting hat will take your word for it?"

"Why don't you ask it?" Harry replied and smiled at her.

"Are you flirting with me now?" Renee asked frankly.

"No," Harry said though he wasn't to sure himself, he had not intended it anyway.

"Good because you should be nice to Fleur," Renee said warningly, "She lost her family after all."

Harry felt very guilty, fortunately the song ended at that moment.

"It was nice dancing to you," Harry said politely, "Hope to see you in Hogwarts next year then."

"Bye," Renee said and Harry hurried off towards Fleur who sat waiting for him alone at the staff table.

"That was comfortable," Fleur said when Harry got close enough to hear her over the song that had just started.

"Sorry," Harry apologized blushing slightly.

"No don't be sorry I set you up with her," Fleur said and handed him a glass of champagne.

"This champagne tastes much better than the one Tonks had," Harry said after a sip.

"That's because you are getting drunk," Fleur explained, "How many glasses of wine did you have for dinner?"

"I don't know... a couple," Harry said taking another sip of the champagne.

"That's the last glass you are having tonight then," Fleur said sharply.

"All right," Harry said but he didn't mean it he just agreed with Fleur because he knew she would give in when she had gotten a few glasses of Champagne herself. He like the way she was over protective about him

As the evening went on several students and professors came up to them and wished them a happy new year.

"One hour left," Fleur said glancing down at his watch that now read eleven.

Suddenly Vertex came into Harry's minds eye so forcefully that it hurt.

"Ouch," Harry and Fleur exclaimed.

"Vertex!" They chorused to each other.

"He's terrified," Fleur stated focusing on her connection to their phoenix.

“Do you think something has happened at Grim... you know where?” Harry asked urgently.

“Yes,” said Fleur confirming his fears.

“We have to go then!” Harry said and got up.

“No you don’t,” Fleur said firmly and pulled Harry back into his seat which was not very hard since Harry had gotten a few glasses of Champagne too much. Harry was about to stand up again when there was a bright flash right in front of him. Fear rushed through his veins and he was sure someone was trying to curse him or Fleur. Then something red like a stunner was in front of him but didn’t move.

“Vertex!” Fleur exclaimed.

The red thing in front of him let out whistle and Harry realised that Vertex must have apparated to them and the reason he didn’t realise that it was Vertex sooner was because he had been momentarily blinded by the flash.

“How did you get here?” Harry asked urgently.

“You apparated didn’t you sweetie?” Fleur cooed and hugged Vertex fondly.

“What happened?” Harry asked the bird as if hoping to get an answer.

“It must have been the fireworks, Wingbeat,” Fleur said smiling a relieved smile, “It scared him, he is after all only a couple of days old after all.”

Vertex whistled as if saying that Fleur was right.

“No death eaters?” Harry asked the phoenix.

Vertex whistled a no.

“Ron and Hermione and everyone else are all right?” Harry pressed on and Vertex sang a reassuringly yes.

"You have grown," Harry said after a moment when he had reassured himself that it only was the fireworks that had scared Vertex.

"Yeah and look, your tail feathers are starting to become golden," Fleur said and stroke his fluffy feathers. Vertex responded with a proud whistle.

"Oh my," Nancy said from behind them, "This is Vertex?"

Fleur smiled proudly, "Vertex this is my aunt Nancy, Nancy this is Vertex."

"Pleased to meet you," Nancy said and curtsied like a little girl.

Vertex sang several tunes in reply, thrilled by Nancy's extravagant greeting.

"Aren't you adorable?" Nancy asked the bird who fluttered his wings proudly. Nancy patted the bird fondly and Vertex seemed to take an immediate like to her as well.

As the evening progressed towards midnight Harry, Fleur, Nancy and Vertex made their way up to the guest tower. Nancy had arranged the fireworks so that they would be best viewed from the panorama window. It certainly was. Harry had not expected the fireworks to be as magnificent as they were.

"Wow!" He exclaimed as a huge green sparkling dragon let out a yet of red sparks just outside the window, "That one was great!"

"Thank you Harry," Nancy said pleasantly, "I have perfected those for nearly ten years now."

"That's my favourite," Fleur said pointing at a horde of sparkling silver unicorns that galloped across the sky, "They remind me of my patronus."

"There should be a stag somewhere as well," Nancy said looking around at the night sky that was filled with all kinds of animals, "Over there chasing that green and red comet!"

"It's great," Harry commented sadly, he knew he was being stupid but he couldn't help thinking of his parents and the way his father had chased after his mother. Vertex sensed his mood at once and fluttered over to his shoulder.

"Hello Vertex," He murmured. To his utmost surprised Vertex spread his wings and hugged his head and then made a smacking noise with his beak against Harry's mouth.

Fleur burst out laughing so badly that she couldn't stand, she slumped down on the floor clutching her stomach. Nancy who had not seen what had happened stood watching Fleur's shrieks of laughter with a bemused expression.

"Don't mind her she's just jealous," Harry told his phoenix and patted him, "Ron and Hermione taught you that did they?"

Vertex whistled a yes.

"You are so intelligent," Harry told his phoenix.

"Yes," Fleur panted, "You are so intelligent I'm sorry I laughed but you are just too cute."

Vertex fluttered over to Fleur's shoulder and kissed her the same way she had kissed Harry.

"You thought him that?" Nancy asked stifling a giggle.

"No," Fleur said blushing badly, "Ron and Hermione must have."

"Imagine Hermione blush when she finds out," said Harry happily.

"She'll match his hair," Fleur added just as happily.

"Think we can borrow Mr Weasley's camera?" Fleur asked grinning her most mischievous grin.

"You don't have a camera?" Nancy asked, "You have to have a camera. You can have one of mine I got one extra for Christmas you can have my old one... if you promise to send me photos that is?"

“We promise,” Fleur said at once, “But are you sure that’s an expensive camera.”

“Sure I’m sure... ACCIO My old camera,” Nancy said loudly, “It was Christmas a couple of days ago after all.”

They spent the rest of the New Years Eve taking pictures. After a few hours into the night, Nancy bid them good night and left them alone. Harry and Fleur managed to drag themselves into the bedroom and fell asleep at once in the huge four-poster. Vertex followed them and found a good chair back to sleep on.

Fleur was soundly asleep the following morning when Harry woke up and he decided to leave her in bed while he and Vertex took a bath. He had not been in the mood last time he took a bath to figure out all the special features. He found a switch next to the taps that was labelled ‘bubbles’, which made it a Whirlpool bath. Vertex didn’t enjoy all the bubbles or perfumes so Harry made him a little bath in a sink.

“Harry?” Fleur’s yell echoed through the top of the guest tower.

“In here Angel,” Harry yelled back and a few moments later the door to the bathroom slid open.

“Don’t just leave me like that, I get ideas!” Fleur accused him irritably.

“Morning to you too, slept well?” Harry asked.

“Sure,” Fleur said grumpily.

“I could do with a bath as well, you wouldn’t mind?” Fleur asked putting her hand in the water.

“Help yourself,” Harry replied, Fleur undressed quickly and slipped into the water. Somehow the awkwardness of being naked alone had vanished and it only felt good to have company.

They had a good time splashing water and foam at each other until they really had to get down to the great hall to get some late breakfast. As it turned out most students and teachers had a late breakfast due to the long night.



"I wish you didn't have to leave so soon," Nancy said sadly. She was one of the teachers that also had a late breakfast, "We've had so much fun."

"Yes," Fleur agreed, "Can't you come and visit us? I am sure Dumbledore wouldn't mind, he already knows you after all."

"Maybe, during the Easter holyday," Nancy said thoughtfully, "It would be fun to visit Hogwarts again."

"And then we could show you the shrieking shack and all," Harry said eagerly.

"Yes and you will love Tonks," Fleur said. She had told her aunt everything about Tonks and it was not hard to see how proud Fleur was to finally have a real friend.

"Well then, if you ask Dumbledore I will ask Olympe," Nancy said smiling slightly.

Harry suddenly realised that he had not given Fleur and Nancy anytime alone and even though Nancy didn't seem to mind his company at all he decided to leave them alone.

"Is that the care of magic care teacher?" Harry asked "Madam... Pedone?"

"Yes, want me to introduce you?" Nancy asked putting down her napkin and making herself ready to get up.

"No, I'll just go ask her about herbs," Harry said and got up from his seat.

"He's a veela deep inside," Fleur told Nancy quietly but not quite enough for Harry not to hear.

"Watch it or I'll sprout feathers," Harry joked and walked off towards Madam Pedone.

The care of magic teacher's English was terrible although they did manage to have a conversation. For the first time Harry managed to

summon Vertex with his mere will. Madam Pedone was as eager to make his Phoenix acquaintance as everyone else had been and summoned several herbs for Vertex.

Harry lied and said that Fleur had forged their phoenix; he didn't want to give anyone another reason to talk about him. When his conversation with Madam Pedone was over he glanced up at the staff table where Fleur and Nancy sat talking in French and decided to sneak off to the guest tower with Vertex. He did not get far however he had just started climbing the first staircase towards his room when Fleur caught up with him.

"Potter!" She yelled angrily.

"Angel?" Harry replied uncertainly, wondering why she was upset.

"What did we promise before we left?" She asked sternly.

"Errr..." Harry said and racked his brain for anything he might have promised before he left Grimmauld place. Then it hit him he had promised Dumbledore not to leave Fleur.

"Not to leave each other," Harry said quietly.

"That's right and why do you think he would make us promise that?" Fleur pressed on.

"He doesn't think its safe," Harry muttered.

"What was that?" Fleur demanded.

"It is not safe," Harry said more clearly.

"That's right," Fleur said, glaring at him in the same way McGonagall usually did when she caught someone braking rules or behaving inappropriately.

"Don't give me that," Harry exclaimed, "I just wanted to give you and your aunt a moment alone."

"I am capable of speaking English if I want a moment alone I will tell you so," Fleur said imperiously.

"Well you haven't said a word about it in English or another language," Harry retorted he began to feeling angry himself now.

"Then perhaps there is a tiny possibility that I didn't need a moment alone?" Fleur asked and the angry tune vanished.

"Sorry," Harry apologized, "I was only trying to be nice."

"You are already nice. Nancy thinks so too," Fleur said softly, "and don't look at me like I'm evil Vertex I was just worried because Harry left so suddenly."

Vertex who had been sitting petrified the entire argument fluttered over to Fleur's shoulder and made a smacking sound on her mouth several times in a row as if making out.

Harry snickered.

"That's really nice sweetie but one kiss is enough," Fleur said carefully when Vertex straitened up and sat as a regular bird on her shoulder. Vertex whistled a reply but it was clear to Harry and Fleur that Vertex had not understood what Fleur meant.

"We are going to have to bring that up with Ron and Hermione," Fleur stated seriously, "Especially if they do more."

"No," Harry said at once, "It's Hermione and Ron we are talking about they wouldn't do that!"

Fleur didn't reply instead she gave Harry a look that clearly said 'Wouldn't they'.

Harry blushed, he knew they might it had just not in his wildest dreams occurred to him that Ron and Hermione would ever do such thing, "Thanks for the mental image," He muttered.

"Oh come on it's not like it's a bad thing, they love each other," Fleur said smiling brightly, "Besides it's not like I think they have done it yet but if they do I don't want Vertex watching."

"Please can we just not mention Ron and Hermione in that way?" Harry asked, "I just like to think about it."

"Fine, I'll talk to Tonks about it instead," Fleur said teasingly, "She can be really giggly you know."

"Did you have to tell me that?" Harry complained, "There are reasons why certain things are called girl talk."

"I always thought that was because girls are in general in shame because of their opinions of men," Fleur said.

"I thought you knew how the male mind works?" Harry asked smiling slightly.

"Not all that mushy stuff I just know how to make things happen," Fleur replied also smiling though rather guiltily.

Nothing much happened that morning Fleur and Harry spent their last hours in Beauxbaton in Nancy's office promising to take care and send photos. Both Fleur and Nancy turned rather emotional and during lunch they could barely speak to each other. It was awful; Harry didn't know what to say or do to make them cheer up so he remained silent. When lunch was over Madam Maxime announced that Harry would be leaving and several of the students who had not asked him for autographs yet surrounded him with Quills and parchments on his way towards his and Fleur's room.

"Well see you later I guess," Fleur said when the three of them were alone and they had their bags packed next to them.

"I'll miss you darling," Nancy said hugging Fleur violently. Both of them let out loud sniffs when they pulled apart.

"You too Harry," Nancy said and hugged him briefly, "Don't do anything too dangerous, be careful both of you and take precautions."

Fleur suddenly blushed scarlet for some reason, "We will," She muttered looking down.

"Good, well if the security isn't too tight we'll see each other this Easter," Nancy said and Harry started to put his invisibility cloak over himself and Fleur.

"Bye and thanks for the camera and everything," Harry said.

"Yes thanks, and take care of Vertex until he apparates back," Fleur said. They didn't dare take Vertex back with them on the portkey and since Vertex had apparated there he could probably apparate back.

"I will, don't worry about him, now go before I burst out crying," Nancy said and with a quick final bye, Fleur tapped the DVD and they whirled away through the colours.

Harry felt sick when the colours didn't end after a minute but managed to reassure himself that they were both perfectly safe and that they were just going strait back to Grimmauld place.

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Another chapter complete... prepare for chapter 30 Remus Remembers.

Please review!

## Chapter 30 Remus Remembers

Harry stumbled and Fleur almost fell had Harry not caught her when they arrived outside Number 12 Grimmauld place.

"You okay?" Fleur asked when she had steadied herself.

"Mmmm," Harry answered not feeling entirely up to a yes.

"Right," Fleur said knowing fully well how good he felt, "Can you see it yet?"

"Yeah," replied Harry faintly.

"Good, let's go," Fleur said pull him along towards Black Manor.

"You are closer to the bell," Fleur informed him when they had reached the front door.

"Oh... right," Harry said and rung the bell, a few moments later the door opened.

"Hurry inside," Mad Eye Moody said his magical eye looking strait at them through the invisibility cloak.

"Hello Moody, eager to see us?" Fleur said teasingly as they passed him in the doorway.

"If it was up too me you would have all stayed at Hogwarts," Moody growled and closed the door behind them.

"Oh Harry we are so sorry, we didn't mean to. He just disappeared and we have looked all over for him and I think he may have left the house," Hermione said from the stairs when Harry pulled the invisibility cloak off them.

"Who?" Harry asked as Moody limped away towards the kitchens.

"Vertex," said Ron grimly and followed Hermione down the stairs, "We couldn't do anything he just disappeared last night."

“Oh, don’t worry about that he just got scared of the fireworks,” Fleur explained, “He turned up in Beauxbaton last evening.”

“He did?” Hermione said happily and relieved, “That’s wonderful I have been so worried... Is he all right? Where is he now?”

“He hasn’t splinched himself has he?” Ron asked knowledgeably.

“Phoenixes can’t splinch themselves, they use natural apparition,” said Hermione rolling her eyes.

“He’s left in Beauxbaton, Nancy will keep him until he feels ready to apparate back,” Harry explained.

“Everything went fine then?” Ron asked seeming relieved.

“Yes, and we got a camera,” Fleur answered fishing out the camera from her bag.

“That’s good,” Ron said.

“Yeah, so how did Vertex behave?” Harry asked as Fleur banished their bags and cloaks to their rooms.

“Just fine, he is a very well behaved phoenix,” Hermione said.

“We noticed you’ve taught him the basics,” Fleur said conversationally while they walked towards the drawing room.

“Basics?” Hermione asked blankly.

“Yeah,” Harry said, “He is a very affectionate phoenix.”

“What are you getting at?” Ron asked, he could tell they were being teased.

At that very moment, there was a bright flash and Vertex appeared singing his phoenix song.

“Hello Vertex,” Fleur cooed and handed Harry the camera. Vertex flew happily onto Fleur’s shoulder and spread his wings around her head. Several smacking sounds could be heard from Vertex.

"You must have thought him that," said Harry teasingly. Ron and Hermione were frozen in shock for a moment but then they both turned the deepest colour of crimson possible. Harry photographed them.

"Hey," Ron exclaimed forgetting his embarrassment, "That's not fair!"

"Sorry mate couldn't help myself," Harry said grinning mischievously.

"But how can you be sure he didn't learn that from you two?" Hermione asked.

"He's spent more time with you after all," Ron added.

Now it was Harry's turn to blush, "We kind of don't do that very often."

He hated admitting that his relationship with Fleur wasn't what it was expected to be, even though he was happy the way it was.

"Sorry," Hermione muttered still very red, "Must have seen us then."

"Just make sure you don't teach him any more," Fleur said warningly.

"Like what, he already knows..." Ron said but then trailed off. "Oh," he added when realisation dawned on him.

"How's your mum and dad, are you brothers still here?" Harry asked forcefully to change the subject.

"No just we and Mad-Eye," Ron said leaping on to the new subject, "Turns our mum has been working for Gringotts off and on for almost a year, she's cooking for them."

"Why don't they hire house elves?" Harry asked settling down in one of the drawing room armchairs.

"Goblins don't get along with house elves and most elves doesn't feel goblins worthy masters," Fleur explained sitting down in his lap. Ron and Hermione gave them a curious glance before they too sat down together.



Harry wanted to ask if Mrs. Weasley were spying on the Goblins but then he thought that she might just work there to earn some extra money. He decided to bring it up with Hermione later since Ron was a bit touchy about money.

“So, what about the rest of them?” Harry asked instead.

“Mr Weasley has been called in to the ministry, they started muggle baiting again,” Hermione explained grimly, putting an arm around Ron’s neck for comfort. “Charlie and Remus help him performing memory charms and take muggles to St Mungo’s”

“Are they authorised to perform memory charms?” Fleur asked.

“Madam Bones authorized them yesterday. They are desperate, more reports are coming in then they can handle,” Hermione explained, “Fudge has been taking money from the misuse of muggle artefacts office for years and now they can hardly deal with the situation.”

“They worked yesterday?” asked Harry.

“Yeah they haven’t been home... here since two days ago that’s when everything started, left right after you did,” said Ron, “And Dumbledore sent the twins to work at something they wouldn’t tell us what... gits!”

“Ron,” Hermione scolded, “They are your brothers and Dumbledore probably made them promise to keep quiet.”

“With all due respect Hermione, you know a lot but you have no idea what it is like to have brothers,” said Ron slightly patronizing, Hermione glared at him.

“You should be happy having brothers,” Hermione snapped starting up an argument with Ron.

“Don’t fight in front of Vertex!” Fleur interrupted covering the little phoenix vision with her hand. Vertex gave a confused squeak.

Hermione looked taken aback, “Sorry,” She mumbled.

"You haven't been arguing in front of him before have you?" Fleur asked looking carefully at them.

"No," Ron said looking confused; he clearly did not expect Fleur to make a point about this.

"Good," Harry stated he agreed with Fleur, Vertex should not have to be exposed to arguments when he just was a couple of days old.

Mrs Weasley arrived later that day in time for dinner though she was exhausted so Harry, Fleur, Hermione and Ron cooked most of the dinner. Arthur, Charlie and Remus didn't return but, to their surprise, Tonks did. She was even more exhausted then Mrs Weasley. The aurors had requested her special talent to follow some suspect and she hadn't slept for twenty four hours. Tonks went to bed at once too tired to even eat.

The rest of the holyday progressed slowly, everyday there was horrible news in the daily prophet and the ministry put out desperate adds for personnel. There was absolute panic and the magical population started to question Fudge's position as minister of magic. Fudge however was not blind to the critics and he made several rearrangements in the ministry.

Arthur Weasley got the authority to employ personnel as he saw fit to his department as well as a new office. Aurors were given rights to use the unforgivables again and the new Auror Voldemort department got new funds even though they didn't do anything that the rest of the aurors didn't.

Fleur had sent a request for an appointment with someone in the department for the Regulation and Control of Magical Creatures to register a phoenix but had not yet received a reply since most of the personnel in that department had been transferred to magic law enforcement. When the final day of the holyday arrived and it was time for their trip back to Hogwarts, Remus arrived with a Portkey that would take them to Platform nine and three quarters.

"How was Beauxbaton?" Remus asked when he and Harry happened to stumble in to each other in one of the corridor.

Remus was looking worse then ever he had not taken to wear the robes Harry had given him for Christmas. The fact that he was on duty for Dumbledore all the time had given him huge bags under his eyes and on top of all he didn't look like he had eaten properly for months.

"It was great, and..." Harry trailed off he wondered if he ought to be careful about mentioning Nancy judging by her reaction but then again she was a veela and only used that as a excuse to have her annual fight with Fleur, "and Nancy was really nice."

"Yeah," Remus agreed and something sad drifted across his face momentarily, "I suppose she told you of our well... adventures?"

"As a matter of fact yes," Harry said not really knowing how to deal with Remus, "And she told me loads about my mum as well did you know her patronus was the same as mine?"

"No I didn't. Fortunately, in those days dementors were not a threat so most people just learned the patronus charm to see what animal or person they took shape of," Remus explained as the great teacher he should be.

"I didn't know it could take form of humans?" Harry asked.

"Yes, humans are perhaps not as usual as animals and there are rare cases when the patronus takes form of dead object as well."

"Anyway," Harry said returning to the subject of his mother, "Did you know she did this in your sixth year?"

Remus burst out laughing for the first time in what seemed ages, "Oh if James had known... it would have been terrible!"

"Why?" Harry asked eager for every detail.

"You all ready know your father had a tendency of being big headed, and I suspect that if he'd know Lily had feelings for him back then..." Remus left the last words unsaid but they were clear to Harry.

"She kind of hates you," Harry blurted out before he could stop himself but Harry agreed with Nancy on that point, Remus had been a real fool and deserved to know it full out.

Remus looked at Harry as if sizing him up, "I can't blame her, I like the rest of us back then lacked some adult aspects."

"She has thought for all these years that you didn't want a part human," Harry said seriously, hoping that Remus would take it good.

Remus let out a bitter laugh, "I suppose you told her about my condition."

Harry nodded, "Perhaps you should apologize to her I think she would appreciate it."

"She would flame me too ashes," Remus corrected.

"Well yes," Harry agreed, "But you should apologize even if she won't forgive you."

"I suppose I could write her a letter," Remus ventured, "But that's stupid, she won't care it's been too long time."

"I just thought you ought to know," Harry said uncertainly, "She wouldn't have cared about you being a werewolf."

Remus looked hurt and angry, "That is none of your business!"

"Sorry," Harry said but found that he was not and added, "But you deserve it, you hurt her badly."

"Shut up!" Remus snapped.

"No," Harry said his temper flaring, "You are too much! You think my Dad and Sirius would just let you carry on with your werewolf self-pity?"

"Shut UP!" Remus yelled.

"NO!" Harry yelled back, "Why are you not wearing the robes I gave you for Christmas?"

"I like these," Remus said through clenched teeth, "They suit me!"

"They bloody hell does not suit you!" Harry snapped, "You are going to wear proper clothes and eat proper meals and I'm going to ask Dumbledore to shut you out of the order until you do so!"

"Dumbledore is happy the way things are," Remus said trying to calm himself.

"He is just going to have to change his mind then," Harry hissed.

"And when it comes to Nancy, she is getting here this Easter if all goes well and you are going to apologize to her!" Harry commanded with as much authority as he could muster.

"I was a grown man before you was born Potter," Remus spat, "I do as I please!"

"You are nothing but a werewolf," Harry said viciously "A filthy dark creature! And you will be so until you accept the truth and stop this self pitying!"

Remus was momentarily stunned by the fact that Harry called him a werewolf. It was low Harry knew it but Remus deserved it, perhaps he'd wake up.

"What do you think Padfoot and Prongs would say about your behaviour?" Harry asked, "I bet they would get you drunk or something and party, perhaps they would set you up with a girl or something."

Remus didn't reply he looked down on the floor.

"THEY ARE DEAD SO YOU HAVE TO DO IT YOURSELF!" Harry yelled suddenly.

Remus head snapped up to his again.

"Go change into some nice robes and you can come along to the platform and wave us off," Harry commanded and when Remus didn't reply Harry yelled, "NOW!"

Remus turned and walked back into his room, the moment Remus was gone Harry let out a long ragged breath. He had been shaking of fury and was still shivering; he had never done any thing like this in his life. He slumped down to the floor and his emotions overwhelmed him. His throat was hurting slightly because of all his shouting.

Then he became terrified what if he had just pushed Remus away from him, what if Remus wouldn't forgive him for yelling at him. He had been very rude and he had put his nose in Remus private business. He knew that Remus condition was a touchy subject and he had steamed rolled that subject thoroughly. A few moments later Remus's door opened and he stepped out dressed in the robes that Harry had given him for Christmas.

"Good," Harry said with more confidence then he felt and stood up. He had prepared an apology but since Remus seemed to follow his directions he felt that an apology would sound stupid and even worse Remus might go back to wearing his old robes, "You look good."

"I don't feel too good," Remus said faintly, "You are right, Prongs wouldn't let me wear those robes and Sirius wouldn't either normally but he never put much value into robes after Azkaban."

Harry smiled he took a deep breath of relief, "You are going to eat properly again?"

"I won't skip any meals," Remus said still faintly, "But I can't promise I will be hungry."

"Right," Harry said and then added, "If you feel like coming up to Hogwarts for Easter and apologizing to Nancy you better fill out a bit."

"I doubt it will matter how I look," Remus said.

"No you misunderstood," Harry said, "If you weight too little you won't burn for a long enough time and that may make matters even worse."

Remus chuckled, "You are too much like your mother for your own good."

"Funny," Harry stated, "Nancy said those exact words as well... but that was right before the argument broke out."

Remus suddenly looked angry again, "I hope you are not trying to set us up?"

"No," Harry said though he thought it would be great if they fell for each other again, "But you do owe her an apology."

"And you are sure she doesn't hate me for being a werewolf?" Remus inquired.

"Her exact words were Oh no poor Remi," Harry said smiling gently, "And then she asked when you were bitten."

"How did you end up talking about me anyway?" Remus asked suspiciously.

"It was kind of hard not to when she told me about her time at Hogwarts and my mum," Harry explained.

"That's right I almost forgot your mother knew them," Remus said his eyes drifting far away as if remembering a long forgotten memory.

"Knew them?" Harry asked.

"Yes didn't Nancy tell you? Well I guess there is a chance she didn't know. No one told anyone much back then," Remus said. "Your mother ran into the Delacour's in London when you were just born. I remember it because James complained about being flamed for some reason. I haven't thought of those days for ages, it was a happy time we were invincible back then at least we thought so and we probably would have been too had it not been for Wormtail."

"So there is a chance I met Fleur when I was a baby?" Harry asked, mildly surprised.

"Yeah I think you might have... now that I think of it you probably must have because James got burned in your home," Remus said thoughtfully.

“Hope I made a good impression,” Harry joked.

A few minutes later, they were all gathered in the drawing room. Tonks and Fleur would go with them on the Hogwarts express and Mrs Weasley and Remus to the platform. Mad-eye Moody would remain at Black Manor; there was always somebody there in case of an emergency.

After a bit of acrobatics the seven of them touched an old hat that was the Portkey. When the clock turned ten forty-five, Harry felt the familiar tug behind his navel and they were off towards the Platform nine and three-quarters. After several hugs from Mrs Weasley and loads of promises to behave, they were off towards Hogwarts.

“So did you freeze the bathroom?” Fleur asked once, she, Tonks, Harry, Hermione and Ron had settled down in a compartment.

“Yeah,” Tonks said, “Dumbledore help conjuring ice-skates, apparently he knew we were going skating and wanted to join us.”

“I told him right before we got Vertex,” Harry admitted.

“Uh huh,” Tonks said, “So what was all that yelling about?”

“Yeah,” Ron added, “What did you and Remus argue about?”

“Nothing,” Harry said quickly, “But he told me something interesting... well funny anyway.”

“What?” Fleur asked.

“Apparently we saw each other when you were in London when we were small,” Harry said smiling slightly.

“We did?” Fleur asked, “How come?”

“I have no idea, but anyway you were over at my parent’s house and Remus said that he only remembers because my dad complained about being flamed.”



"Well if he looks like you..." Fleur teased and they all laughed. "So our parents knew each other well?"

"I have no idea, apparently my mum ran into you in London. I don't know if they knew each other before that or if they just had Nancy in common and my mum recognized your mum," Harry said.

"We'll never know," Fleur said sadly.

"No we wont," Harry agreed and as if sensing their sadness Vertex apparated into the compartment with a flash. They had left him at Grimmauld Place, as they still were not to sure about bringing him along on Portkeys.

"Hello sweetie," Fleur cooed and hugged the phoenix, "You know when mummy is sad."

"You know you two really act as if Vertex is your baby," Tonks stated, "You are all parental and stuff."

"Yeah," Ron agreed eagerly as if he had wanted to point that out but never had the guts to do it himself.

Harry wanted to deny every such thing but Fleur opened her mouth first, "Of course we are! We made him and that makes us parents in a way besides it's not like he got a mum and dad phoenix somewhere to be better parents then us."

Harry smiled guiltily, he loved Vertex as much as Fleur did of course but the thought of being called a parent was embarrassing.

"Aren't we?" Fleur asked Harry.

Harry swallowed his pride. "Of course," He said truthfully even though he blushed brick red.

Fleur smiled triumphantly and straitened Vertex fluffy feathers lovingly. This made her seem ten times more a mother since Vertex didn't like to get his feathers straitened or pruned, it made him look smaller but his protest didn't stop Fleur the slightest. Perhaps Fleur still had some bird instinct to care for bird feathers.

"Do you think Dumbledore forged his phoenix alone or with somebody?" Tonks asked abruptly.

"I don't think so," Hermione said, "And if he did... well they must be gone by now since Fawkes is always with Dumbledore and nobody else."

"Time for patrol," Hermione stated glancing down on her watch.

"Right" Ron agreed and got up from his seat gingerly and stretched. Ron was tall by now several inches taller than Harry and he was about six foot tall. Hermione watched him lovingly.

"There is another happy couple," Tonks said sadly, "Why can't I ever just fall in love like that and why can't any one fall in love with me like that?"

"What about Charlie?" Fleur asked, "He's nice and good looking and he got red hair too."

"Charlie is nice," Tonks stated gloomily.

"What about Snape then?" Fleur asked.

They all burst out laughing.

"What kind of men do you like then?" Fleur asked giggly.

"I don't know..." Tonks said sadly.

"Is there a student?" Fleur asked grinning like mad.

"No, they are all too young I don't know if you have noticed but I am six years older than the oldest students," Tonks said.

"They wouldn't mind," Fleur said.

"I do," Tonks said flatly, "Perhaps in a few years but right now it would only feel awkward besides it's not really allowed to flirt with students."

"Come on there has to be someone? What about the aurors?" Fleur asked, "Bet there is loads of strong men there?"

“Like mad-eye?” Tonks asked.

“Well any death eaters then?” Fleur joked.

“Married all of them,” Tonks retorted.

“This won’t do you’ll have to figure out someone who you could at least consider going out with,” Fleur said shaking her head disapprovingly.

“I did yesterday there was this muggle who was being bated and got stuck to a door handle,” Tonks said dryly.

“Oh, a muggle was he cute?” Fleur asked eagerly.

“He was,” Tonks continued without emotion, “But then when the... who ever it was who was going to get him free arrived the door handle poisoned him and he died a minute later still stuck to the handle.”

“Oh darling,” Fleur burst out and hugged Tonks tightly. Tonks sobbed desperately into Fleur shoulder.

“I can’t handle it! It’s too much it’s awful and I had to use the killing curse yesterday... it was just a warning but it was so horrible,” Tonks wailed and broke down completely. She muttered all kinds of nonsense, Fleur agreed with whatever she said and held her tightly.

Harry sat opposite Fleur and felt very awkward, he wanted to make Tonks feel better but he couldn’t think of anything to do that Fleur didn’t already. Instead, he just sat there and stroked Vertex feathers absentmindedly. He heard the food trolley approach their compartment and decided to go out in the corridor rather than to have the sales witch pop into their compartment.

“Hello dear,” The sales witch said, “Anything from the trolley?”

“Buy some chocolate frogs and warm Butterbeer,” Ron said from behind him. He and Hermione were just back from their patrol.

“Right,” Harry replied, “Perhaps you shouldn’t enter the compartment just now.”

“How come?” Hermione asked.

“Tonks is a little bit upset about auror stuff,” Harry explained.

“Let’s cheer her up then,” said Ron.

“Well the thing is, she is not just a little upset,” Harry clarified and stepped between Ron and the compartment door.

“Have you made up your mind yet?” The sales witch asked.

“Six Butterbeers a pumpkin juice and a big box of chocolate frogs and cauldron cakes,” Harry said, he had gotten quite used to ordering things of the trolley by now.

“I’ll put it in a bag for you,” The witch said, “That will be two galleons and four knuts... let’s say two galleons even.”

Harry paid the sales witch and a few minutes later, when Tonks sobs had subsided from inside the compartment they entered. Tonks had pulled herself together and dried her tears but it was not hard to tell how bad she felt.

“Here,” Harry said and handed her an opened Butterbeer bottle, “Its warm so don’t burn yourself.”

“Oh Vertex,” Hermione gasped. Vertex who had been left inside the compartment on the little table when Harry bought their food was crying huge clear phoenix tears.

“Oh Vertex it’s all right,” Fleur said and pulled the phoenix close to her.

“I think he thinks you have hurt your shoulder,” Harry said when Vertex tried to put his head on Fleur shoulder where Tonks had cried moments earlier.

“Oh,” Tonks said she didn’t seem too depressed anymore.

"It's all right," Fleur said again and quickly bared her shoulder to show him that she was not wounded, "See it is fine."

Vertex stopped crying and gave Fleur a searching look.

"I'm fine it was Tonks who was hurt," Fleur said softly so that only Vertex and Harry could hear, "But she is okay now."

Vertex kissed Fleur on the mouth and settled down in her knee like a swan. Fleur transfigured the pumpkin juice bottle to a bowl so that Vertex could drink from it.

The start of term feasts was great. Beauxbaton could never compete with Hogwarts when it came to feasts. Vertex had dinner at the staff table with Fleur since neither Fleur nor Harry had heart to leave him behind in her office. Vertex seemed to mirror Fleur's mood at the staff table and was very well behaved. When the house elves made all the food appear, there was a plate with herbs for Vertex and a bowl of water.

"There is no need to rush, Hermione," said Ron, Hermione was practically throwing down the food, "The library isn't open now you will have to wait until tomorrow."

Hermione took a huge gulp of pumpkin juice to clear her mouth, "I know it isn't," She managed before swallowing another mouthful with the help of even more pumpkin juice.

"So you are back to throwing up as a protest?" Ron asked teasingly.

"Of course I'm not," Hermione said after she had swallowed even more food.

"Yeah, well anyhow you are going to throw up as a protest or not," Ron stated when she stuffed down another mouthful.

"I'm off to the library," Hermione said when her plate was empty a few seconds later.

"Hey it's closed, remember?" Ron asked very clearly.

“Yes, but I got special permission to ‘encourage my further studies’ one of the best parts of getting the best grades in fifty years,” Hermione said quickly as she stood up and left the great hall at a sprint.

“Oh I see,” Ron said sarcastically to Hermione’s empty place, “So what are you going study? ... That is very interesting. You know I remember those old days when you had the horrible habit of just disappear to the library with out telling anyone why.”

Harry chuckled, “When you two move together you are going to have to combine the dining room and library.”

“Yeah,” Ron agreed darkly but Harry knew he loved Hermione just the way she was.

So what do you think? I let Harry get angry in this chapter as well. I think Harry will need it if he is going to stand up to Voldemort.

Please note that I never let Hermione speak with her mouth full, she is a very well behaved girl and wouldn’t do that... she just ate very quickly.

Now I am going to hold my breath until I get many wonderful reviews.....!

## Chapter 31 Love is it?

The following morning when Harry and Ron and the rest of the Gryffindor boys descended from their dormitory Hermione was not waiting for them in the common room. Which meant either that she had stayed up late last night or was too engrossed in a book to remember to wait for them and had gone down for breakfast without them. It was the later. They found Hermione sitting at her usual seat with a huge book in front of her, next to the book stood a bowl of porridge though it looked untouched and cold.

"You are awake," Hermione said happily when they sat down across the table.

"Morning to you too," Harry replied.

"Slept well?" Ron asked.

Hermione gave them her most bossy and superior look, "Harry I need to ask you a few questions."

"Sure," Harry said and Hermione started to flick the pages in the book until she came to page with a beautiful, slender woman, a veela.

"Hey this isn't about Fleur is it?" Harry asked, he didn't mind Hermione asking him questions about his girl friend but he didn't like the idea of answering questions about his relationship with a part veela.

"Well," Hermione said defensively, "Just a little."

"If you wonder about veela stuff I suggest you ask her!" Harry snapped.

"But that's the point Harry," Hermione said pleadingly, "I'm not trying to find out veela stuff."

"Fine," Harry said calming himself.

"Good first..." Hermione said and then looked around at the table, "Grab some toasts we're going for a walk."

"It's freezing outside," Ron complained.

Harry on the other hand didn't mind freezing a bit if it meant privacy, "I'll get our cloaks from the common room," he said.

A few minutes later, a door opened and the Gryffindor trio slipped out into the newly fallen snow. Hermione had slipped down into the kitchens and gotten them each a bottle of hot chocolate so that they could drink while they were walking she had also brought a couple of buttered toasts each.

"We're up early we'll have time for a walk around the lake," Hermione said and they set out for the lake.

"So what did you want to ask me?" Harry asked a couple of minutes later.

"Well you don't have to answer if you think it's too private," Hermione said carefully.

"Like he would otherwise," said Ron teasingly.

"Hang on you don't suspect she is a spy again do you?" Harry asked.

"No," Hermione said firmly, "I wanted to ask you if you have noticed anything strange about her?"

"Yes," Harry said irritably, "She's a part veela."

"We noticed that too, mate, at a couple of occasions."

"Apart from that I mean," Hermione clarified.

"Well, she actually loves me," Harry said feeling very stupid.

"That is not something that is sorted under strange," Hermione said angrily, "Perhaps rare but not strange."

"I can't think of anything else," Harry retorted "What's up with these questions anyway, do you know something?"



"I don't know anything that's why I ask," Hermione said softly, "If I knew I wouldn't have too."

"But you do suspect something," Harry stated.

"Yes," Hermione said and they walked in silence for several minutes before Hermione went on, "Have you noticed anything about Fleur besides her veela charm?"

"No nothing besides her veela powers," Harry replied and drank the last of his hot chocolate with a wave of his wand the bottle vanished.

"Show off," Ron muttered teasingly and vanished his own bottle.

"What do you mean by veela powers?" Hermione asked.

"Well for starters her ability to make any male crawl for her then there is the bird thing and then she sometimes... I don't know... leaks her emotions," Harry said awkwardly.

"Leaks her emotions?" Hermione asked, "What do you mean leaks her emotions?"

"Yeah you know if she's very angry or sad or embarrassed you feel it," Harry explained.

"You can feel her emotions?" Ron asked.

"Yes," Harry replied starting to feel annoyed, "Like yesterday when she was proud over Vertex at the staff table... but you wouldn't feel that unless you really focus at her."

"What you are describing Harry," Hermione explained carefully, "Is not a veela power."

"Don't be stupid Hermione," Harry said, "What else would it be?"

"Veela powers are limited to charming and seducing males, turning into feather covered animals in shapes of huge birds and conjuring fire," Hermione said as if reciting a text book, "There is no such thing as leaking emotions."

"That's what my uncle said about magic," Harry scoffed through gritted teeth.

"You got a really horrible temper Harry, I'm just trying to help," Hermione said stubbornly.

"Then why don't you go help somebody with a problem!" Harry spat.

"Hey mate chill," Ron urged him. Harry took a deep breath and tried to calm himself.

"I'm sorry you don't have a problem, but are you not curious why she fainted that night and how she healed you in St Mungo's?" Hermione asked.

"Sure," Harry agreed.

"And there is the phoenix forging as well," Hermione added thoughtfully.

"Yeah but when it comes to Vertex, Nancy suspected that Dumbledore might have had something to do with that."

"Do you think that as well?" Hermione asked.

"No," Harry admitted, "He would have said so."

"Good," Hermione said, "So we agree that there is something strange with her?"

"No," Harry said at once, "Isn't it more likely that there is something strange with me after all that has happened?"

"Yes but it all started with Fleur," Ron pointed out.

"Maybe that's just something... a relationship brings out of me," Harry said hesitantly feeling very awkward.

"You've done it?" Ron asked breathlessly and Hermione gave Harry a look that made him blush.

"No," He exclaimed, "I told you before we are not that close on that front."

"But you've slept with her well... a lot," Ron said grinning widely.

"Yeah, but nothing more," Harry said defensively, "We barley kiss."

"What's your problem? You know me and Hermione kiss why can't you admit that you kiss Fleur?"

"Fine I've kissed her a couple of times and I've been with her naked a couple of times as well," Harry said his temper rising again.

"That was more then I needed to know," Hermione stated.

"Yeah," Ron agreed but he didn't look entirely convincing.

"I told you we barley kiss!" Harry practically shouted.

"All right," Hermione said, "If you say so I believe you, but don't you feel... you know, like kissing her?"

"No," Harry whispered flatly. This was the question he asked himself countless times every day, the question that hurt the most.

"Would you rather be with another girl?" Hermione asked very carefully.

"No," Harry whispered, "I really love Fleur."

"What about her? How does she feel about not kissing much?" Hermione asked softly.

"If she wanted the kissing part I would do that," Harry said truthfully.

"Is there anything you want to tell me?" Hermione asked in practically a whisper.

Harry remembered the time he had lied to Dumbledore in his second year he had decided later to never keep anything from Dumbledore again. Hermione was on the other hand not Dumbledore she was much more.

"I think I need medical attention," Harry whispered to his two best friends, "He damaged me somehow or the Dursleys did... probably both."

He felt very uncomfortable confiding in them, especially Ron since he was a boy but he had no choice. He had to tell someone, it hurt too much to keep in, especially since he had been naked with her.

Hermione hugged him solemnly, "Thanks for telling us."

"Yeah," Ron agreed seriously, "Mind telling us how bad it is?"

"Everything is fine," Harry said awkwardly, "It just doesn't happen around Fleur."

"What about Cho?" Hermione asked.

"Things were fine then," Harry said, "Perhaps it was something about the ministry thing or I just didn't love Cho enough."

"Do you plan on going to Madam Pomfrey?" Hermione asked, "We can go with you?"

"I don't think I dare," Harry admitted, "It's bloody awkward... what if there is something really big thing wrong."

"Like not being able to be a father?" Hermione asked as if reading his thoughts, "Seeing as every other organ was all right it would be a long shot. Besides most of these things can be fixed with magic or the muggle way as well these days."

Harry didn't respond he kept his eyes down on the snow as they slowly walked.

"Would it be better if we came with you?" Hermione asked softly, Harry didn't know what to reply. If he really was going to Madam Pomfrey he wanted someone along and Fleur was out of the question, he didn't want her to know just like that how badly it might be.

"Let's go now before you change your mind," Ron said firmly knowing this was something Harry had to do even if he didn't want to.

“But what about Transfiguration?” Harry asked, half-heartedly trying to find an excuse not to go.

“It started five minutes ago besides this is more important,” Hermione said as they entered the school again.

“It’s really nice of you but you really don’t have too wait for me,” Harry said when they approached the hospital wing.

“Don’t be stupid, you need us.” Hermione said, showed him inside the hospital wing and closed the door behind him.

“What have you done now Mr Potter?” Madam Pomfrey asked looking over from her desk.

“Nothing,” Harry muttered feeling very nervous.

“Are you ill?” Madam Pomfrey asked after a quick ocular check on him.

“Is there someplace we can talk... privately?” Harry mumbled.

Seeing the solemn expression on his face Madam Pomfrey guided Harry past the beds in the hospital wing and into a room in the back with out a word. It had a comfortable looking sofa and several armchairs that all stood around a low table with some flowers in a vase on.

“Sit down Mr Potter” The Nurse commanded.

Harry didn’t say anything but sat down in the sofa while Madam Pomfrey sat down in one of the chairs.

“Am I right in assuming this has something to do with Professor Delacour?” Madam Pomfrey asked.

“Yes... how did you know?” Harry muttered.

“Normally it’s the girl that comes here but it does happen the other way around as well,” Madam Pomfrey explained though Harry was

completely lost. His problem couldn't be that usual and if it was, did girls really come here to complain?

"How far has it gone are we talking about contraceptive potions or is it too late?" Madam Pomfrey asked.

"No it's not like that," Harry said, desperately wishing that had been the case.

"You are keeping the baby? You are very young but I suppose she is a few years older."

"No there was NO sex!" Harry exclaimed and admitted after a moment, "That's the problem."

"Oh," Was all Madam Pomfrey managed.

"And Fleur is not pregnant," Harry added awkwardly when Madam Pomfrey obviously thought Fleur had been with somebody else.

"But you said Mr Potter that contraceptive potions were not it?" Madam Pomfrey asked now utterly confused.

"Well," Harry said and swallowed even though he didn't have any saliva in his mouth, "I don't think I am up to it, I think I am damaged."

"Lay down and I will have a look at you," Madam Pomfrey said standing up and pulling out her wand.

"Do you need me to take my pants off?" Harry asked or at least that is what he thought he asked he was too nervous to think properly.

"No, it's a simple charm," Madam Pomfrey said and waved her wand over his privates.

"You are physically healthy Mr Potter," She said a few minutes later, "It is not uncommon however there are some..."

"Thanks!" Harry interrupted, relieved that he was healthy.

"You are welcome, have you spoken to your partner..." Madam Pomfrey told Harry something his exhausted brain had no possibility

to capture. Harry only vaguely managed to grasp that he should talk to Fleur about it and that it was perfectly natural in his age to have some difficulties one way or the other.

"How did it go?" Hermione asked breathlessly when he emerged from the hospital wing a few minutes later.

"I'm fine," Harry said smiling widely, "She said I'm healthy."

Hermione hugged him for the second time that morning and they headed off for the remaining transfiguration.

"I do expect a very good reason why you are almost an hour late?" McGonagall asked them when they entered the transfiguration classroom.

"I was in the hospital wing, Professor" Harry said.

"Very well Mr Potter but what about Mr Weasley and Miss Granger?" McGonagall asked.

"They waited for me Professor, it was a personal matter," Harry said and the Slytherins sniggered.

"Very well I will verify this with Madam Pomfrey and decide an appropriate punishment later," McGonagall said sternly.

Today's class was beginning with theory of human transfiguration and then they started to practise transfiguring objects with the weight of humans. It was very important when transfiguring humans that you managed a clean switching spell or things could be very painful for the person being transfigured. To their relief their head of house seemed to forget to punish them for being late or perhaps McGonagall thought the rumours that flew around the school enough.

Draco Malfoy and Pansy Parkinson had been busy coming up with several different truths about what Harry's personal matters could be. The favourite or the one that offered most gossip was that Harry had made Hermione pregnant and thereby cheated on Ron but most of them involved Fleur somehow. Fleur didn't pay any attention to the rumours and didn't even ask Harry if there were any truth in them

what so ever. Harry had never intended telling Fleur that he suspected that there was something wrong with him since that part of their relationship was strained enough.

Ginny and Selena was both fine even though Ginny had not spent anytime at all with anyone during the entire holyday. Accordingly to Selena Ginny had been horrible to both her and Tonks when they tried to cheer her up. The following day they had charms as it was Tuesday and Professor Flitwick was very pleased to have them all back after the holyday.

“Welcome back everyone I hope you all enjoyed your well deserved holyday,” Flitwick said, “I would like to start this term with giving Gryffindor fifty points for a magnificent charm work by Miss Hermione Granger who has made this wonderful quill as a Christmas present to my dear college Professor Tonks.”

Hermione blushed and did her absolute best not look too pleased as Flitwick picked up the quill case they had given Tonks from his desk. With a proud smile, Flitwick opened the quill case and placed the quill inside on a parchment.

“I here by congratulate Miss Hermione Granger on her newly earned fifty points to Gryffindor house,” Flitwick said happily to the quill which wrote his words neatly on the parchment.

“Professor,” Malfoy said lazily in his most annoying voice, “Anyone can make a Quick Quotes Quill if they got a Phoenix feather to work on.”

“Very good Mr Malfoy, five points to Slytherin for knowing about the splendid magical abilities of a phoenix tail feather but I’m afraid I must disagree not many students even in this wonderful class would be able to create a Quick Quotes Quill.”

“Scisseraso!” Flitwick suddenly cried and the quill was cut into pieces by hundreds of invisible scissors and fell to his desk.

Harry gasped he had expected Hermione to make the quill unbreakable. He and Ron glanced at Hermione to see how she had taken the sudden destruction of her handiwork. To Harry’s surprise



she was still trying not to look too pleased with herself. Then as Harry glanced back at what was left of the Phoenix quill he saw that it had started to fade, and a minute later, it was gone.

“Miss Granger has modified the tearing charm most often found in expensive books with great success and has managed to make this quill case restore the quill if it is destroyed or after a few hour has it not been returned. The only way of destroying the quill completely is to break the charm on this quill case which I am sure you have learned in Defence against the Dark Arts is not a simple thing to do. Especially as this case is made of metal and in addition has several strengthening charms placed on it.”

The entire class was impressed, even the Slytherins though they would never admit it, when Flitwick opened the quill case again and the phoenix Quick Quotes Quill was there looking completely new.

“If anyone else of you has made any interesting enchantments please show me so I can award house points for your work,” Flitwick announced and several Ravenclaws started whispering eagerly.

When the weekend finally arrived, Harry got the first moment alone with Fleur since before the start of term. They were both sitting on her bed or rather Harry was sitting on the bed and Fleur used him as a pillow. They were joking and teasing as usual, for once Vertex was not around and it made a nice change for once since they didn't have to watch their language and actions.

“Do you find me strange?” Harry asked abruptly.

“No,” Fleur answered at once, “Why do you ask that?”

“Hermione figured something was strange about us,” Harry told her.

“She did?” Fleur asked sadly, “I thought she didn't mind me being... what I am.”

“She does not,” Harry said firmly, “She wasn't talking about the veela part.”

“What was she talking about then?” Fleur asked, she was very hurt by the fact that Hermione found her strange as so many others did, “And why did you ask me if I thought you were strange?”

“Why did you faint that night and how come you cured me?” Harry asked.

“Well if you have to know I had my period and I felt a little ill, it wasn’t really that strange that I fainted,” Fleur said uncertainly.

“Then how come you could cure me just by touching me?”

“I think it’s because I love you,” Fleur said softly, “Just like when you help me from my bird shape, Wingbeat.”

Harry had never thought of love as an answer to their strange situations, but it made sense. After all, his mothers love had left him a very powerful protection even after she was dead so it wouldn’t be too far fetched if Fleur’s love could cure him from Spell shock.

“You know I love you so much that I can feel your emotions,” Harry admitted.

“You do?” Fleur asked hopefully.

“Yeah I used to think you sometimes radiated them because you are part veela,” Harry said dreamily.

“I can feel your emotions too, sometimes, but I thought I was just imagining because I feel so close to you,” Fleur said smiling brightly.

“Guess we never thought it was mutual,” Harry said and flashed her a smile.

“It was stupid,” Fleur said smiling back, “It was how I knew you were crying back in Grimmauld Place that first day.”

Harry caressed her hair comfortingly.

“I’m tired it’s been a hard week,” Fleur said after a moment of silence.

Harry leaned back in the bed with Fleur. They snug up with each other and fell asleep for several hours even though it was in the middle of the day. Harry didn't return to Gryffindor tower until late that evening. Only Ron and Hermione were still in the common room.

"We were not sure you would return," Ron said as Harry entered through the portrait hole.

"Guess you were lucky then," Harry teased.

"So how was Fleur?" Hermione asked politely.

"Just fine... we sorted out your mystery by the way."

"You did?" Hermione asked eagerly, "You asked her about it?"

"Yes," Harry said proudly, "She can feel my emotions too. We figured we... have strong enough feelings for each other."

"But that can't be it, Harry," Hermione said apologetically, "It doesn't work that way I love Ron very much but I can't sense his emotions."

"Yeah well we are different from you," Harry said stubbornly.

"Connections like yours and Fleur..." Hermione started.

"Hang on," Ron exclaimed, "This sounds just like your connection with him."

"It's nothing like the connection between me and Voldemort," Harry said angrily.

"They are connections aren't they?" Ron asked bluntly, "I mean you can sense you-know-who's emotions too."

"Connections like the one between you and Fleur or the one between you and Voldemort are most often created by failing magic," Hermione said forcefully to prevent Harry to snap at Ron.

"So," Harry said slowly trying to remain calm, "are you suggesting Fleur have tried to curse me? Besides I can only sense her feelings when she is close!"

"Oh no Harry it doesn't have to be a curse it can be any..." Hermione trailed off and her eyes went wide as if something just had occurred to her, "When the door burst open! In the beginning of last term it must have been then!"

"We shared that connection from the first day we met at Grimmauld place," Harry said coolly.

"Oh," said Hermione disgruntled, she hated being proven wrong, "You didn't have any magical accident during the tournament did you?"

"No, and I still believe in the strong feeling theory and so does Fleur," Harry told them firmly, "I'm going to bed see you tomorrow."

The following morning Harry awoke early much earlier than he usual did. After a few moments of thinking, he remembered that he had taken a long nap with Fleur the previous day and had probably reduced his need for sleep by doing so. He was on the verge of trying to wake Ron but decided not, Ron would no doubt want to sleep for another hour at least like the rest of his room mates.

Instead, he dressed as quietly as he could and headed towards the great hall and an early breakfast. The common room was still empty and quiet except for the sound from someone walking down the stairs from the girls' dormitories. It was Ginny she had taken to the habit of eating early before everyone else.

Ron had asked her why once and she had snapped, "To don't have to answer to stupid questions!"

Ginny's hair was a mess and she was dead pale though what really made her look in bad shape was her expression.

"Hello Ginny," Harry said. Ginny startled and looked up, she had not noticed him before.

"Hi," Ginny said.

Harry now realised why she was so pale, she was tired. "You look tired," Harry pointed out.

"That is because I am tired," Ginny replied irritably.

"Come on let's go down and have breakfast," Harry said with more confidence than he felt. He was scared that Ginny would snap at him and perhaps even hex him.

"Right," Ginny said after a moment and headed towards the portrait.

Harry smiled behind her back it was the friendliest word he had gotten out of her for months.

"So how are your OWLs coming up?" Harry asked.

"Fine," Ginny replied shortly.

"That's great," Harry said, "So what's your best subject?"

"Depends, Defence against the dark arts or Arithmancy" Ginny replied.

"That's good you could become a curse breaker like Bill," Harry said happily.

"That's what I have in mind," Ginny said coolly.

"Are you going to Egypt then?" Harry asked as they entered the great hall.

"Perhaps," said Ginny, "If you are going to eat with me, you have to keep quiet. I am not in the mood for a conversation if you haven't noticed."

"Oh sorry," Harry apologized, "I'll keep quiet."

"Good," Ginny said and sat down. Harry sat down on the other side of the table in the great hall.

He was trying to eat his bacon as usual but couldn't quite focus on his food. He had missed Ginny, she had always been someone who had supported him and been kind even he was not always kind towards her but now something was wrong. He and nobody else for that matter had any idea of how to help her.

As he sat in his thoughts, he heard a sudden tune of Phoenix song and a moment later there was a bright flash and Vertex appeared high above them, like the post owl usually do.

"He's spent too much time with Pigwidgeon," Harry said smiling fondly, "He thinks he is a post owl."

Ginny giggled for the first time in what seemed like ages and Harry smiled at her. Her expression changed from happy to fearful and then she contorted her face in that unreadable way and focused on her food again.

"Why did you do that?" Harry burst out.

"What?" Ginny asked apparently trying to act as if nothing.

"You were happy and then you made that face and started eating again," Harry said.

"I told you I am not in the mood for a conversation," Ginny said coolly.

"Please answer my question," Harry begged.

"No! And if you say another word I'm..." Vertex had landed next to Ginny and before either of them had noticed anything Vertex had stretched his neck and kissed Ginny on her mouth.

"Damn it Vertex!" Ginny exclaimed huge tears suddenly rolled down her face and she ran from the great hall before Harry could stop her.

When Harry came to his senses he rushed after her but it was too late she was gone.

"Hey Harry," Ron said coming down the stairs from Gryffindor tower with Hermione and Selena.

Selena was much more relaxed around Harry now and didn't mind the slightest anymore if anyone found out they were friends. Hogwarts had done Selena good and she was as happy as Harry had been, and still was, to be a Gryffindor.

“Did you see Ginny?” Harry asked them urgently.

“No, did she snap at you again?” Ron asked and Selena shook her head.

“She broke down,” Harry explained, “And before I could ask why she just ran.”

Harry told them about every thing that had happened that morning but none of them could make any sense as usual about Ginny's behaviour.

“And the really odd thing is,” Harry said, “Vertex has never kissed anyone except me and Fleur before, he's never even met Ginny and then Ginny says ‘Damn it Vertex’ like she knows him.”

“She's hiding something,” Hermione said seriously.

Selena nodded thoughtfully.

“I don't know... dad sometimes jokes with mum and tells us how difficult she was as a teenager, maybe it's a curse or something on girls in the family,” Ron said only half serious.

“She was sad about something” said Harry and his friends nodded trying to figure out what possibly could be wrong with Ginny.

However, as Ginny had been very moody for a long time they could not find another reason other than that she had loads particularly violent hormones and that she probably had nightmares that kept her from sleeping as much as she needed. After all Harry realised if it's awful for him that Voldemort is back it must be worse for Ginny since she was being manipulated and controlled by him for almost a whole year. They didn't speak of Ginny's mood until later that day after classes in Hagrid's hut.

“Haven't seen her around much lately to tell you the truth,” Hagrid said when they asked him about Ginny, “Skived off from class a few weeks ago as well, bit sad because she would've liked unicorns.”

"You taught unicorns again?" Ron asked, it was obvious to Harry and Hermione that Ron found it hard to believe that Hagrid taught anything none lethal could he help it.

"I know what you mean Ron but most students seem to like unicorns," Hagrid said misinterpreting Ron's tune.

"They do?" Ron asked with a tiny tingle of sarcasm that Hagrid fortunately missed.

"So how is your brother?" Hermione asked Hagrid giving Ron a reproving glare.

"Grawp is fine he has made a clearing and build him self a cover, he's a good craftsman" Hagrid informed them proudly, "But I'm afraid I can't let you see him Dumbledore's orders."

"Why?" Harry asked.

"You are not to go outside the castle grounds without the order," Hagrid said sternly.

Harry sighed he should have guessed it; he had started to feel almost claustrophobic no matter what he did someone had something to say about it.

"And the centaurs?" Hermione asked and poured herself some more tea.

"They are coming around, thanks to Dumbledore of course," Hagrid said and a wide smile crossed his huge face.

"What did he do?" Ron asked eagerly.

"He pointed out to them that the planets did not say anything about them fighting him," Hagrid chuckled, "So they are completely friendly again hasn't said a word since. Great man Dumbledore."

"Did he speak to them recently?" Hermione asked conversationally.



“No back after Halloween apparently someone... but I’m not supposed to tell you that,” Hagrid said and glanced over at them clearly expecting them to start and pry information from him. Instead, Ron and Hermione cast Harry a nervous glance and tried to act as if nothing, Hermione even took a cookie from a plate.

“Are you all right?” Hagrid asked seeming almost disappointed, “You are not up to something are you?”

Harry stared down on his tea, he felt awful talking about the night of Halloween. As if reading Harry’s mind Vertex appeared in a flash and landed on his shoulder.

“Vertex,” Harry said happily and his phoenix kissed him soundly on his mouth.

“Oh I got some herbs over here,” Hagrid exclaimed happily and started to rummage around in some drawers, “Ah here it is, got them yesterday all the way from Egypt just for you Vertex.”

Vertex whistled a thanks and tucked in on a green herb Hagrid offered him.

Hagrid watched Vertex eat fondly, “Fleur’s all right?”

“Yeah great,” Harry said, “Her birthday’s coming up the 30th and I got to think of a good gift.”

“You can give her a necklace it works great... ouch!” Ron said as Hermione hit him playfully on his arm. Hagrid and Harry chuckled.

“What about a good long book then?” Ron asked rubbing his arm.

“That’s not what I meant,” Hermione said irritably.

“I don’t know I bought her that bracelet for Christmas. I don’t think jewellery would be such a good idea,” Harry said thoughtfully.

Loads of plot progress in this chapter, opens up a couple of new doors doesn’t it?

Please be nice in your reviews... well extra nice... I expect some of you might have an urge to flame me after next chapter.

## Chapter 32 Friends before Lovers

"Happy birthday to you, Happy birthday to you, Happy birth day dear Fleur, Happy birthday to you!" Harry, Tonks, Ron, Hermione and Selena sang at the top of their voices early the morning of January 30th. Fleur groaned and turned around in her bed so that she faced them.

"What took you so long? I've been lying awake ages waiting for you," Fleur groaned sleepily.

"Liar," Harry stated, "You were snoring like a pig."

"I did not," Fleur said indignantly, "I didn't snore, did I Tonks?"

"Oh I don't remember I'm far too used with you by now to even notice," Tonks remarked casually.

"Are you taking the mickey?" Fleur asked them and they all burst out laughing, "You are supposed to be nice to me it's my birthday!"

Somehow, Vertex seemed to have understood Fleur's accusation because he flew over to Fleur from his stand and glared playfully at the rest of them.

"You are my only friend sweetie," Fleur said and hugged the bird fondly.

"What about me?" Harry asked, "I got you a present!"

"You think you can buy my friendship?" Fleur asked in mock seriousness.

"Uh-huh," Harry replied teasingly.

"But you'll have to open mine and Selena's first!" Tonks said and Selena handed Fleur their package. Fleur smiled happily and started unwrap the gift. It was a pair of square glasses.

"Now you can look exactly like McGonagall when you take points," Tonks announced.

"Thanks a million," Fleur said sarcastically.

"Go on try them on!" Selena said and Fleur did so.

"I love my cousin," Selena said suddenly.

Fleur's mouth fell open.

"What?" Asked Ron.

"You are lying," Fleur told Selena seriously.

"Perhaps we woke you a bit early," Ron said uncertainly.

"No, I can see it," Fleur said gesturing to her new glasses.

"Are those charmed with a veritas spell?" Hermione asked enthusiastically.

"Yep!" Tonks said proudly, "VeritaVision they are new to the auror department got them for the extra duty over Christmas and Selena said they look like McGonagall's and so we thought of you."

"I'm flattered," Fleur said dryly though she really was flattered, "Thanks, you didn't have to you know."

"I know we didn't just remember that my birthday is June the 3rd and Selena's is April 23rd," Tonks replied happily.

"Yeah whatever," Fleur teased as Hermione handed her another gift.

"It's from me and Ron," Hermione said. Fleur opened the wrapper it was a book.

"Teaching at Hogwarts," Fleur read from the cover.

"Yes," Hermione said enthusiastically, "It's really good McGonagall borrowed me her copy once."

Fleur smiled, probably happier to have friends than over the gift, "Thanks, I'm sure it's very useful."

They all turned expectantly to Harry.

"This isn't much compared to the bracelet," He said awkwardly, "But I hope its okay anyway."

"I'm sure it's fine," Fleur said and Harry handed her his package.

"Can it be a book?" Fleur asked and fixed him with her gaze.

"I am not sure I should answer that when you are wearing those," Harry said gesturing towards her glasses.

"It is a book then?" Fleur stated smilingly.

"Nope," Harry replied, "See? No book. You will just have to open it to find out."

"Right" Fleur said and started unwrapping the package.

"I figured we needed one now that we got a camera," Harry said when Fleur pulled out a huge red photo album. "It's unburnable, untearable and it is doesn't get wet even if you threw it in the lake."

"Thanks, it is great," Fleur said happily and jumped out of bed. She ran across the room and pulled out a pile of photos from a drawer. A few moments later they all laughed at the different photos as Fleur inserted them in the album.

"We are going to have to take so many photos," Fleur said happily when their stack of photos only occupied the first pages of the album.

"Yeah," Harry agreed, "You could ask Colin for some as well I bet he has loads of photos of us from the tri Wizard tournament."

"Do you think so?" Fleur asked happily, "But shouldn't you ask him, you are friends."

"I suppose."

"Come on I'm starving," Ron exclaimed when he couldn't fight his hunger anymore.

With the help of Dobby and Hermione's new connections in the kitchens there was a small breakfast feast in the defence against the dark art teacher's office.

"Wow," Fleur exclaimed when she saw the mountains of food in her office.

Fleur's birthday continued in a very happily and after dinner, they had a small party in Fleur and Tonks's office.

"Look what I got for tonight," Tonks said happily and showed them two large bottles of champagne.

"So that's why Selena isn't here?" Harry asked.

"Well, basically," Tonks said looking a little guilty, "Don't worry though I'll make it up to her."

"You do realise that you are breaking ever rule regarding student teacher relations if you offer us alcohol?" Hermione asked seriously.

"That's what rules are for," Tonks replied and poured them all a glass.

"To Fleur on her twentieth birthday!" Tonks said raising her glass. The rest of them took a glass.

"To Fleur!" The rest of them shouted, except Fleur of course, and sipped their champagne.

"See?" Ron asked Hermione happily, "I've drunken alcohol and I'm not dead yet."

"You will be dead if you get drunk" Hermione said warningly.

"Don't bicker," Tonks said happily, "Be happy!"

Hermione smiled guiltily and took another sip of her champagne.

Tonks gave Ron a wink as Hermione looked away for a moment. Ron got the message and drained his glass quickly before Hermione could notice.

“Don’t worry Ron,” Tonks said brightly, “I do that so often we have charmed the floor to clean it self... here say stop.”

Tonks poured Ron another glass. Hermione narrowed her eyes in suspicion but didn’t say anything.

“Oh?” Tonks asked deliberately misreading Hermione’s expression, “Drink up and you can have another glass as well.”

“Another glass as well?” Hermione asked tonelessly.

“Err... well Ron spilled his first glass,” Tonks said uncertainly making her lie obviously.

“Oh Hermione come here,” Ron said persuasively and pulled her down in his nee. Hermione allowed herself being pulled down and settled down happily.

Fleur smiled coyly at Harry and walked over to the chair Harry just sat down in.

“Room for me?” Fleur asked.

“No, afraid not... you will have to share seat in this chair with somebody else.” Harry said grinning widely as Fleur sat down in his knee.

“Happy birthday angel,” Harry said and kissed her on her cheek.

Fleur sighed and leaned into him.

Tonks looked a little alone where she was standing alone in the room. Tonks didn’t seem to notice however, as she was busy pouring herself another glass of champagne.

“We really have to set her up,” Fleur whispered sadly, “That’s her third glass in five minutes.”

Harry nodded and looked over towards Ron and Hermione. Hermione giggled over something Ron said and sipped her champagne happily.

Ron was good for Hermione in that way, he made her loosen up a bit when needed.

"They are very happy," Fleur said sadly.

"Mmmm," Harry agreed uncertainly, "Are you okay Fleur you seem a little tense?"

Fleur smiled brightly at him and handed him her glass, "Have another glass Harry, yours is almost empty."

"What about you?" Harry asked as he took her glass and handed his to her.

"I'll get us a new one," Fleur replied and stood up.

Harry didn't reflect too much over why Fleur suddenly wanted him to drink. Fleur returned a few seconds later with the other bottle and sat down in his lap again.

"Let's celebrate," Fleur said and made Harry empty his glass.

"Yeah!" Tonks yelled.

"You are getting drunk, Professor," Hermione giggled.

"Yep," Tonks replied carelessly, "And I do hope you learn something from it."

Hermione giggled again, Harry realised she was getting a little tipsy as well. Fleur ignored them and snuggled up with Harry. Harry could feel that she was sad; he supposed she was thinking of her family again. Harry hugged her comfortingly and Fleur replied by pressing her body against his.

Harry looked up from Fleur when he heard Hermione giggle again. She had both of her arms wrapped around Ron and leaned in to kiss him. It didn't turn out as an innocent kiss and Harry looked over at Tonks again. Tonks had been quiet for some time now and Harry saw her sit with a whiskey bottle at her desk glancing sadly at Ron and Hermione every now and then.



"Don't mind them and Tonks will be fine," Fleur said and made him look down at her again.

Fleur smiled brightly at him again. Harry thought for a moment that she was blasting him with her veela charm but then he figured it was probably the alcohol. He did in fact feel influenced by it but not in a good way; he felt a vague headache and decided not to drink anymore for the night.

"I can't believe I am twenty," Fleur said softly, "My parents were in my age when they got together for real."

Harry nodded, "Yeah my parents too."

"Ron and Hermione will probably be pretty serious when they reach twenty as well." Fleur said thoughtfully.

Harry smiled slightly as he imagined Ron and Hermione as adults, he wondered briefly if they ever would stop their bickering.

Fleur leaned in to him again and hugged him firmly, "You are the best you know that Harry don't you?"

"Fleur is it your family again?" Harry asked. Fleur was radiating sadness so intense that she should be crying.

"No, I don't want to think about them now," Fleur said softly and kissed him reassuringly on his mouth.

Harry wasn't fooled the alcohol or her birthday or something else had made her think of her family again.

"Let's get you to bed, I think you've had enough for today," Harry said and stood up with Fleur. None of the other noticed them leave and slip into the bedroom.

Fleur didn't bother with any shyness as she undressed for bed, "You'll stay with me won't you, Wingbeat?"

Harry nodded and removed most of his clothes as well. Fleur smiled at him once more as she got into bed, Harry followed. Fleur wrapped

herself around him unembarrassed. Harry hugged her firmly hoping to comfort her.

"I really like you Harry," Fleur whispered seriously. Harry could feel her sadness increase even further.

"Let it out Fleur it can't be good to keep all that in," Harry said softly.

Fleur sighed but didn't respond after a long moment she let go of him and lay down next to him.

"We have to stop pretending?" Fleur said uncertainly.

"What?" He asked.

"We can't go on like this" Fleur said, "It will kill us in the end... it is killing me anyway."

"What?" He asked again this time with a note of terror in his voice. He rolled over to his side so that he faced her.

"Ron and Hermione are so happy together," She told him.

"They are meant for each other" He replied uncertainly.

Fleur didn't reply for a long moment they just stared at each other in the darkness.

"Did you notice the way Hermione giggled?" Fleur asked smiling desperately.

Harry didn't respond instead he reached out for Fleur but she pulled away.

"Have I done something stupid?" Harry asked, desperately trying to remember anything he might have said or done.

"I don't think we are the way Ron and Hermione are," Fleur whispered, "You made me think the other day... Hermione is right it isn't love, at least not romantic love."

"It doesn't matter to me," Harry said soothingly though he still believed in the love explanation.

"I just don't know anymore everything is just too..." Fleur trailed off in lack of a suitable word.

Fleur looked lost in her thoughts for a moment but then she looked up resolutely at him.

"I think we should... break up," Fleur whispered and some silent tears started to role down her face.

Harry's entire world crumbled and fell around him and a horrible coldness settled inside his chest.

"I'm sorry Wingbeat" Fleur said.

"But I love you," He croaked.

"Oh I love you too, I love you so very much," Fleur said immediately, "But I don't think I love you as my boyfriend."

"Goodbye then," He said and started to get up from Fleur's bed.

"No Harry, you don't have to leave!" Fleur said urgently, "I didn't mean we would have to break up like that. I was just thinking we should redefine our relationship!"

"It's okay Fleur," Harry lied even if Fleur didn't like him the way he liked her he didn't want to hurt her, "It's fine you'll be happy I... I... will just go."

He put his robes on back again as quickly as he could and ran from the room.

"Harry! Mate!" Ron exclaimed and gave a loud hiccup.

"Ron!" Hermione scolded she appeared to have sobered up, "I told you not to have that final glass, you are drunk! And you are a prefect! I can not believe I let you do this."

“Cheer up Hermione, Ron just got poor resistance to this,” Tonks said and examined a half full bottle of fire whiskey.

Harry didn't listen to anything they said however he just left the office.

“Harry?” Hermione asked just before he closed the door behind him. He didn't feel like talking he just wanted to escape so he ran. He ran down the stairs and out into the winter night it was freezing but Harry welcomed it. The painfully freezing cold seemed to numb his emotions slightly so he continued to run. Before he knew it he was standing in the middle of the Quidditch pitch.

“ACCIO FIREBOLT!” He yelled into the night and a few moments later, his broom came soaring across the sky towards him. He mounted it and kicked off forcefully. The extreme chill of the ice-cold wind made him his teeth chatter painfully but he welcomed it. He started practising dives each and everyone more daring.

“HARRY!” A female voice yelled but all he noticed was that it was not Fleur's voice so he ignored it and continued flying.

Harry found that he was not freezing anymore, he wondered for a moment if his body perhaps started giving into the cold but then shook the thought off he didn't care. He continued diving at breakneck speed almost as if daring gravity to harm him but each time a few feet over the snow he pulled up. He was diving again; he approached the ground much faster then if he had been falling freely, he ignored every instinct in his body to pull out of the dive but he waited until the last tenth of a second before crashing. It was too late this time however, the handle of his Firebolt dug itself down in the snow and Harry flew off. He landed painfully on his back.

“HARRY!” The female voice yelled again, “You stupid insane maniac! Don't be dead, please don't be dead!”

A girl with bushy brown hair emerged above.

“Hermione,” He croaked.

“Oh Harry you are alive,” She exclaimed and threw her arms around him, “Have you broken anything are you in pain?”

"Yes," Harry said.

"Is it your back? Don't try to move if you have broken your back that can make matters worse," Hermione said frantically and started to mumble to herself, "What do I do now? What do I do? I should conjure a stretcher. That's right a stretcher and then I magic Harry on to it and go straight to Madam Pomfrey she will know what to do. Now the incantation to conjure a stretcher. Think Hermione you can do it... Remember... Remember, remember! You can't think you have to calm down that's it take a deep breath... Oh Bloody hell!"

"Calm down Hermione," Harry said, "I don't think I have broken anything the snow saved me."

"Oh, but you said you were hurt... can you move your legs?" She asked and Harry moved his legs and arms but didn't get up.

"You stupid bastard! What do you mean by doing that? Don't you realise you could have died? Fifty points from Gryffindor!" Hermione screeched, "Now get up and go straight back to bed!"

"What's the point?" Harry asked flatly.

"What do you mean what's the point?" She screeched again, "You'll freeze to death! You are not wearing a cloak and I don't feel like casting heating charms on you all night."

"I don't mind freezing to death," Harry said despondently.

Hermione stared at him for a moment as if not wanting to hear what he was saying.

"What happened?" She finally asked when she had calmed down enough to speak to him.

"S-She... broke up... with me," Harry stammered, "It's over she doesn't want me anymore. I was so stupid! I thought we never would break up. I thought I would grow old with her I thought we were going to have kids one day. I really thought she loved me as much as I love her."

“She does love you, Harry,” Hermione said softly and recast heating charms on them so that they wouldn’t freeze, “Tell me what happened from the beginning.”

Harry looked at her for a moment before he began to speak. He told her everything all of his emotions and all about how good their relationship had been including all embarrassing details. When he finally was done, Hermione sat quite for a long moment.

“What exactly would change in your relationship then?” Hermione asked carefully, “You weren’t doing anything besides sharing bed once in a while.”

“I love sharing bed with her,” Harry said feeling very close to tears.

Hermione sighed, “She was really upset when you left her you know.”

“She was?” Harry asked.

“Yeah,” Hermione reassured him, “Now do you feel good enough to get back to Gryffindor tower?”

“I suppose,” Harry said and started to get up, “Ouchh!”

“What?” Hermione asked, “You said nothing was broken!”

“I said I didn’t think anything was broken,” Harry replied. His ribs were throbbing painfully and he supposed that several of them might very well be broken.

“It’s the ribs,” He whimpered and tried to position himself in the snow so that it wouldn’t hurt breathing.

“But why didn’t you tell me you were in pain?” Hermione asked.

“I did!” Harry exclaimed.

“Yes I know you did but I thought you meant emotionally!” Hermione said angrily, “Fine! Petrificus Totalus! Mobilicorpus!”

“Stupid irresponsible stubborn maniac,” Hermione mumbled as she pulled the floating Harry along. A few minutes later they entered the hospital wing.

Harry couldn't say anything since he still was petrified not that he could think of anything good to say. Hermione crossed the hospital wing and knocked on Madam Pomfrey office door. Several minutes later the door opened and a very sleepy looking Madam Pomfrey poked her head out.

“Yes?” She asked Hermione.

“Harry slipped in the shower,” Hermione lied smoothly, “And I think he has broken a few ribs.”

Madam Pomfrey looked over at the stiff floating form of Harry and then her eyes darted towards his Firebolt Hermione were holding.

“He used this as a crutch and managed to get himself down to the common room but then he was in to much pain to go on so I performed petrificus totalus on him to keep his bones strait and then I floated him down her with mobelicorpus.”

“Very well Miss Granger, place him over here,” Madam Pomfrey said and gestured towards a bed. Hermione did as she was told and when Harry was placed on the bed she said, “Finite,” and Harry sank into the bed.

“Thanks Hermione,” He said when he regained the ability to speak.

“You're welcome,” Hermione replied, “Madam Pomfrey, can I assist you or am I free to go back to my dormitory?”

“No dear, you go back to bed and I will sort out Mr Potter, he should be able to join you for breakfast to morrow morning”

“Good night then,” Hermione said and strolled off.

Ron Harry found out the following morning had been to drunk to follow Hermione to the Quidditch pitch and had too much of a hang over to even attend breakfast.

Harry avoided everyone, especially Fleur, he knew he was isolating himself and that it wasn't good for him. But it didn't matter; Harry had lost the will to care. The only reason he kept going to the meals and classes was because Ron and Hermione forced him. Defence against dark arts was terrible but as Harry absolutely refused attending if Fleur was teaching Fleur found reasons not to teach the sixth years and let Tonks teach alone.

The Slytherins teased and provoked him when they found out what happened but as Harry still inspired some respect after his defeat of Snape no one dared pushing him too far. Hermione gave up her work in the kitchens and helped Harry teach the dueling club since he was not entirely up to it himself anymore.

Tonks with the help of Vertex made several attempts to patch things up between them but Harry ignored both of them when they tried.

Winter slowly turned into early spring. Becoming seventeen in the Wizarding world was a big thing Harry found out on Ron's birthday March the 1st. Ron got gifts from everyone in his family even distant relatives and they had a huge party in the Gryffindor common room. Harry couldn't help feeling a little better.

March turned into April and the blue spring sky could be seen above the students in the great hall one morning a few days before Easter.

"Here you go," Hermione said and handed them Ron and Harry a parchment each. By the way Hermione was holding her nose in the air Harry could tell that what ever was on the parchment he had received it had something to do with schoolwork.

"You made study schedules for us?" Ron asked looking at his parchment.

"Yes" Hermione said still holding her nose very high.

"We do know how to do homework you know," Harry said.

"N.E.W.T practise tests?" Ron read loudly from his parchment "We have more then a year before we even have to worry about the newts!"



"I am not forcing you to do any of this it's just something you ought to do if you are serious about becoming aurors. You do realise that many students will want to become aurors now when Voldemort is back and they are only going to chose the absolute best," Hermione informed them.

She did have a point Harry thought, if he just did all of this and continued to do school work the way Hermione wanted them to, they would succeed in becoming aurors without a doubt.

"Can't we skip the N.E.W.T practice? I mean the rest of it doesn't look too bad but I mean the newts are horrible," Ron complained.

"They won't be horrible next year if you already have done them once besides this is just for fun it doesn't matter how we do," Hermione said.

"Sure," Harry said quickly, Fleur had just entered the great hall and Harry didn't feel like continuing the conversation, "I'll do it... see you later."

Unfortunately for Harry's sake Fleur was fed up with Harry's escapes so she turned around and followed him when she saw that he was leaving as usual.

"Wait up Harry," Fleur called after him like so many times before the last couple of weeks. He pretended not to hear her and headed strait for the closest stair which happened to be the one to the dungeons.

"Look Potty is running away from the veela," Draco Malfoy said he was on the way up. Pansy who was accompanying him giggled

"I really can't say I blame you," Draco went on in his most annoying voice, "I wouldn't want a creature like her running after me either. But I suppose you are lucky you could have had her family tailing you as well."

Harry was shaking with anger and did his utmost not to curse him on the spot, "I believe old Salazar designed your common to be accessible to snakes. Now Draco we wouldn't want a little poisonous snake to get in its little brain to bite students would we?"

"You wouldn't," Malfoy said losing his annoying smirk for a moment.

"I can tell you I have executed more intelligent creeps than you before," Harry went on taking out all his frustration Fleur had caused him on Malfoy.

"You'd be in Azkaban," Draco said.

"Would I? I must say being Dumbledore's favourite pays in the long run, besides who would miss a death eaters son enough to even press charges," Harry said coolly.

"I just heard you threaten Draco Malfoy," Pansy Parkinson said, "You are going to get expelled."

"Who would believe the-great-boy-who-lived ever would do such thing?" Harry asked her innocently.

"Now run along and remember to keep your dormitory doors shut at night," Harry said.

"You are dead Potter!" Malfoy snarled and left together with Pansy towards the great hall and breakfast.

"He won't sleep well tonight," Fleur said coming out of a tapestry right beside him.

"Can't you just leave me alone?" Harry pleaded, "You hurt too much, if I am going to ever get over you, you have to stop reminding me. And please, please stop radiating your emotions like that. I can't stand it any longer! Please just go away, go to Egypt and find Bill again he'll take you back just stop doing this to me! Please!"

"Do you think I feel any better about it then you?" Fleur asked angrily, "I love you Harry and you have feelings for me so please at least listen to me!"

Even though speaking to Fleur was the last thing Harry felt like doing he found himself hesitating. Fleur looked at him so pleadingly and desperately that he couldn't refuse her.

“Right I am listening,” Harry finally gave in.

“Here?” Fleur asked glancing around nervously, “Can’t we go to my office?”

Harry didn’t say anything but walked straight to her office, he waited for her to open the door and then entered and sat down in the chair they usually both sat in.

Fleur didn’t say anything she went straight to the drawer where Tonks usually kept the bottles and pulled out a bottle of fire whiskey.

“It will do you good?” Fleur asked and gestured towards an empty glass.

Harry nodded and Fleur poured him a huge glass fire whiskey which he drunk in a few gulps. Just like when he had been flying in the middle of the night he welcomed pain only now it came in the form of stinging whiskey.

“You promised we would always be friends,” Fleur said accusingly, “No matter what, we would be friends.”

“Sorry,” Harry muttered hoarsely, “it hurts too much... How could you dump me like that?”

“I did not dump you!” Fleur exclaimed, “That was not what I meant to do anyway. I just realised that we don’t match in that sort of relationship. Hell even Roger Davis and I worked better in that way!”

“Yeah?” Harry asked coolly, “Did you enjoy him much?”

“We never did anything more than kissed,” Fleur said scandalised, “Do you really think I would do anything with him? He was a stupid male who just happened to be someone who asked me for the ball and for the future record that was before Ron asked me.”

“You wouldn’t go with Ron even if he asked you first,” Harry said disgusted.

"All right, I wouldn't, not then. He just got in the way I never meant to embarrass him and make him ask me in front of everyone I was just playing with Cedric," Fleur said.

"You did know he had already asked Cho then right?" Harry asked thinly.

"Yeah," Fleur said vaguely, "Oh no you don't Harry James Potter don't you dare try make me look like some kind of veela that just seduces because she can!"

"Well what the hell did you do to me then?" Harry said rather loudly.

At that moment the door opened and Tonks looked in on them she was carrying a huge pile of papers and books.

"GET OUT!" Both Harry and Fleur yelled at her.

Tonks startled, "Sorry," She said and closed the door quickly.

"I'm sorry Harry," Fleur said sincerely, "I never wanted to hurt you, I just figured that since we don't exactly fancy each other as lovers perhaps we should both look elsewhere for that part."

"So you just want to be friends," Harry summarised grimly.

"Friends with a very special connection," Fleur said trying to make him see things more brightly.

"And don't try to tell me you don't fancy other girls I know you do." Fleur said and then added in a whisper but Harry heard her, "everyone but me."

"I've never even looked at another girl," Harry said indignantly.

"Except the girl I set you up for that dance with and in the begging of the school year you used to blush when Ginny was around."

"Oh that, well I happened to see Ginny naked in Grimmauld place and I have trouble facing her after that," Harry said apologetically.

"You saw other girls naked while being my boyfriend?" Fleur asked in mock anger.

"Well only she, Tonks and Hermione but that's all I swear" Harry joked; he hadn't intended it just came out of him. He couldn't stay mad at Fleur any longer even if she wasn't his girlfriend.

They smiled at each other.

"If you want to we can go back to being a couple but I think we should try just being friends and see how it is," Fleur said uncertainly.

Harry nodded, he could understand her reasoning and he had to admit to himself that feeling no desire was a good reason to change things.

"So you agree we try to be friends and then we'll see what happens and if nothing happens we will still be friends and start seeing other people," Fleur asked.

"All right," Harry agreed seriously. Being friends with Fleur was better than nothing Harry reasoned and he still had a chance to get her back.

Harry and Fleur watched each other uncertainly it was a little difficult being just friends when they had been so close.

"I figure you might want this back," Fleur said and slipped her bracelet off.

"You promised you would never take it off," Harry replied tonelessly. He didn't know what to feel about the bracelet anymore, a part of him wanted to yell at her and tell her off for removing it for just a second another part was happy that she asked him first.

Fleur sighed heavily and put it on again.

"So is Nancy still on for the Easter?" Harry asked hoping that was the sort of things friends talked about.

"Yes," Fleur said happy for his change of subject, "Everything is arranged."

"Good because I got a bit of a confession to make," Harry said.

"You haven't done anything stupid have you?"

"No, at least I don't think so," He muttered.

"Go on," she urged him.

"I've persuaded Remus to apologize."

"You didn't!" Fleur said breathlessly, "She might hurt him!"

"He is prepared for that in fact I think he have gained some weight for the purpose of burning longer so your aunt will be satisfied," Harry told her, "Or at least that is what he wrote in his last letter."

"I hope he has the sense to just happen to be here by accident and not because we invited him or anything?" Fleur asked.

"Oh no I'm sure he figures something out all we have to do is to go missing or something so they get a second alone," Harry said, "I know he isn't expecting anything but do you think they might get together again?"

"Maybe if we help them a little," said Fleur mischievously.

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Errr... time for the reviewing part... right... is there any point of asking you to not go feathery and flame me?

Next chapter's title: **Loopy Lupin and Loony Lyon**

## **Chapter 33 Loopy Lupin and Loony Lyon**

"Were where you Harry? You missed Charms!" Hermione asked when Harry got down for lunch and seated himself opposite his two best friends.

"Did you make up with Fleur?" asked Ron, not waiting for Harry to answer Hermione.

"Yeah," Harry said, "How did you guess?"

"Tonks told Selena and she told us," Ron explained quickly.

"So why did you have to ask where I had been?" Harry asked Hermione curiously.

"I was only being polite and didn't want to bring up a sensitive topic just like that," Hermione said as if they should have figured that out for themselves.

"So are you together again?" Ron asked bluntly.

"Well... no," Harry said though he didn't feel too bad about it, it was better then it had been the last weeks anyway.

"You aren't?" Hermione said sympathetically, "Are okay with it?"

"Yeah I think so..." Harry said uncertainly, "We weren't much of a couple anyway... I suppose the big difference is that we don't plan on spending the future together does that make sense?"

"Sure it does Harry," Hermione said and smiled her warm innocent smile, "We are so happy you two made up."

"Yeah you haven't exactly been skipping the past weeks," Ron agreed.

"Hey guess what?" Harry asked suddenly.

"You haven't broken any school rules have you, Harry?" Hermione asked, "You will cost us the house cup!"

"You didn't help by taking fifty points from him!" Ron exclaimed and started up on their latest argument topic.

"I caught him out of bounds and after curfew," Hermione defended, "I had every right to take points from him and if I had not I could have lost my badge!"

Hermione had of course apologized to Harry for taking those points with the excuse of being upset though she never told Ron that.

"I threatened to let a poisonous snake bite Draco Malfoy in his sleep," Harry said quietly knowing Ron would hear anything regarding Draco even if he was arguing with Hermione.

"You can do that?" Ron exclaimed enthusiastically, "But why did you warn him let's just send a snake in and..."

"Are you suggesting murder, Ronald Weasley?" asked Hermione sternly.

"No... we could just make him really ill. I bet Hagrid can get us a snake with a really painful but none lethal venom," Ron said dreamingly.

"Ron!" Hermione scolded, "Harry was not serious and he will not do any such thing! It is against the rules."

"Why would it be against the rules Harry can't help if a snake gets in to Malfoy's dormitory and who can blame the snake for biting him? Any Snake with some kind of brain would bite him."

Hermione sighed and turned to her food, "I just wish you two could ignore him."

Harry and Ron stared at Hermione; they had both expected her to threat with taking house points. As Harry had promised they followed Hermione to the library after lunch to study.

To their great surprise Hermione didn't bring them books that could possibly prepare them for their newts.



“Magical Maladies a study of rare magical accidents?” Asked Ron, reading the title of the most boring looking book.

“It is a very informative book,” Hermione told him, “Now since you obviously don’t love Fleur more than anyone else loves somebody would you agree with me that there is something strange with you and Fleur, Harry?”

“I suppose,” Harry agreed grudgingly.

“You still have a connection with her then?” Hermione asked as she started reading the index of the very boring looking book.

“Yes well she’s only radiated emotions so far,” Harry explained.

“So far... is there more?” Hermione asked looking up at him.

“I figure the reason she felt so good to touch was the connection too,” Harry said trying not to sink into memories of just how good it felt.

“She feels good to touch?” Hermione asked enthusiastically.

Harry nodded awkwardly.

“She has smooth skin, she’s warm or soft?” Hermione asked.

“That is pretty obvious isn’t it?” Ron asked carelessly, “I mean girls are that way.”

Hermione glared at Ron.

“No not that well that too but... I don’t know it just feels good... a bit like when I held my wand for the first time,” Harry explained and then added in a whisper his friends couldn’t hear, “But much, much better.”

“Like that tingling warm feeling?” Hermione asked as she opened another book and started flipping the pages mercilessly.

“I don’t think you should tell Fleur that,” Ron said jokingly, “Hey you feel like my wand... no wonder you broke up!”

Harry couldn’t help smiling.

“Stupid book!” Hermione exclaimed and ran away towards the medical section of the library to get a better book.

“Thanks a million mate,” Ron joked gloomily, “You do realise Hermione will spend the entire Easter in here now?”

“Sorry,” Harry apologised teasingly, “But if you want to I can transfigure you to a book. I think I am up to it now.”

“Can’t believe all the theory she makes us go through. I’m telling you I’d rather suffer pain from a failing switching spell then study the theory any more,” Ron said exasperated, “I must have worn down 20 quills on the subject!”

“Don’t buy sugar quills then,” Hermione said coming back from the medical section with another armful of books.

“Hey without Quidditch Sugar Quills are the best thing about this place,” Ron said indignantly.

“What about visiting the kitchens?” Hermione asked.

“Apart from that,” Ron said slightly disgruntled, “And apart from the prefects’ bathroom.”

“What about the dueling club?” Harry asked in mock anger.

“Well yes okay the dueling club is fun,” Ron agreed.

“Nothing else?” Hermione asked and smiled at Ron seducingly. Harry turned away he didn’t want to see Hermione smile that sort of smile it was way too private and not meant for him to see.

“No,” Ron said though he was now playing with Hermione, “What? Can you think of something I’ve missed?”

“Maybe but my memory is not too good at the moment,” Hermione cooed silkily.

“Perhaps I can remind you?” Ron offered gently.

That was it Harry got up and left, they didn’t even notice.

Harry spent some time with Fleur though never alone with her. Both of them took care to bring Tonks or Selena along. Harry had become very close to Selena, that forest incident had the same affect the troll incident had had in Harry's first year. Selena was a very understanding girl and didn't even ask why Harry so often looked her up before he went to visit the Defence against the dark arts teachers.

Before Harry knew it, it was Easter and most students went home to their families. In fact the only Gryffindors left was the Weasleys, Selena, Hermione and Harry. This was good because that meant that Fleur and Tonks would be able to spend time in their common room.

Normally most student would stay over the Easter holyday in Hogwarts but since the war now was a reality with several attacks everyday, most families took every opportunity to spend time together.

"Hello Fleur, Tonks!" Hermione called when Fleur entered through the portrait hole closely followed by Tonks. It was the first morning of the holyday and the students who were going home had just left.

"Hello everyone," Fleur greeted.

"Marry Easter!" Tonks exclaimed happily.

"Marry Easter?" Selena asked giggly.

"That's right!" Tonks said and winked at Selena.

Harry and Ron looked up from their game of chess and said their hellos. Ginny didn't say anything as usual. She just kept reading her book turned towards the fire in one of the squashy armchairs. Crookshanks was stretched out on the floor near the fire, watching Ginny sleepily.

Next to Crookshanks Vertex was sleeping like a swan. Vertex respected both Ron and Hermione and their pets as family and would often get into his head to spend time with any of them, today it was Crookshanks.

Crookshanks being part Kneazle knew of course that Vertex wasn't a normal bird and got along nicely.

"Fleur if you don't mind I have some rather sensitive questions to ask you?" Hermione asked carefully.

"Don't start again Hermione we spent all yesterday in the library can't you give it a rest for a few hour?" Ron pleaded.

"What?" Tonks asked, "Is it veela stuff... oh come on Fleur don't look like that! Everyone here is fine with you being a veela, so you should be as well."

"I am fine with being a veela," Fleur replied rather forcefully.

Ron rolled his eyes and Harry couldn't help returning the look.

"Honestly," Hermione scolded them.

"I really am fine with being a part veela," Fleur said indignantly, "So what did you want to ask about me?"

"Actually it's not about your veela part..." Hermione said and glanced over at Harry for help.

"It's about us," Harry said awkwardly, "You know... that stuff."

"I've been thinking about that too," Fleur said worriedly and sat down with Tonks on the couch.

"That feeling stuff?" Tonks asked, Fleur had apparently told her about them.

"Yes well," Hermione said hesitantly and glanced down on a parchment she had taken notes on from different medical books the previous day, "First off all I would like to make sure you both experience this the same way, that it is mutual."

Selena looked back and forward between them probably wondering what was going on.

"How would you describe physical contact with Harry feel like?" Hermione asked sitting ready to write down anything Fleur might say.

"It's a warm feeling a bit tingling... just for the record," Fleur added when Hermione wrote down exactly what Fleur was saying, "It's not you know... like well..."

"Arousing?" Hermione asked making every one blush though she did not seem to notice.

"Yeah," Fleur said blushing worse then everyone except Harry, "I used to think it was because Harry is a boy and that it was natural to enjoy body contact even though it has never happened with any one else."

"So that's why you sleep in our dormitory. You are a boy," Ron said grinning widely, "I always thought it was because the other girls didn't want to share theirs with you."

Tonks, Selena and Fleur burst out laughing and Harry started chasing Ron around the common room.

"Boys!" Hermione said and tried to look stern though she had trouble stifle a giggle.

"That would be boy," Ron said while dodging a jinx from Harry behind a chair, "Since I am the only one here."

"Just you wait Weasley," Harry said in mock anger and whirled a hex after his best friend.

"Draco got detention," Selena said suddenly and Ron stood up behind the chair he was hiding and looked over at her.

"Really?" Ron asked complexly forgetting that Harry was trying to curse him.

"No," Selena replied shortly and Ron was hit by a hair growing charm.

"Thanks Selena!" Harry called.

"Not fair!" Ron exclaimed as his hair started to grow. It didn't stoop growing until it reached the floor, "You tricked me!"

"Yep," Selena admitted teasingly, "Couldn't help my self."

"Secondly Harry says that he can sometimes feel your emotions as if you were leaking or radiating them?" Hermione asked when everyone had settled down again.

Fleur nodded, "I can sometimes feel his as well... just now he was happy chasing Ron."

"You enjoy cursing your best friend?" Ron asked pretended being hurt while performing the counter charm to make his hair short again.

"Uh-huh," Harry said grinning widely.

"Careful or you'll go bald!" Hermione hissed looking very pained at the way Ron performed the counter charm.

"No I won't, I just like it short," Ron said carelessly.

"Here let me help you," Hermione said obviously not trusting Ron to do his hair properly, "You can't even see what you are doing."

A few minutes later Hermione was done with Ron's hair. It was much longer then Harry ever had seen it even a little longer then his and he had always kept his long enough to cover his scar.

"For the record," Tonks said grinning madly, "Hermione fancy boys with long hair."

"I do not," Hermione denied though it was a clear lie since she was blushing deeply.

"Right then for the record, Hermione does not fancy boys with long hair even though she is blushing brick red," Tonks teased.

"Oh shut up," Hermione said and tried to recover from her embarrassment by focusing on her questions, "Is there anything else you have noticed except from this?"

"No, well we get very well along. Even when we didn't know each other in Grimmauld place," Fleur said.

“Hey what about dreams?” Ron asked abruptly, “You have dreams about you know... maybe dreams are usual.”

“Yes, of course,” Hermione said and looked expectantly over at Harry and Fleur.

“I don’t think I’ve had any dreams,” Fleur said thoughtfully, “Not like visions anyway.”

“Me neither. I can’t remember...” Harry trailed off for a moment. He had a vague memory of a very odd dream with Gabrielle, only he hadn’t recognized her then. Harry focused hard on the memory and slowly he put the pieces together again, “I had this odd dream but it wasn’t a vision.”

Ron grinned widely at this, “In what way was it an odd dream?”

“Well first of all it wasn’t about Fleur,” Harry said hoping to wipe the grin off Ron’s face, “And secondly it wasn’t a happy dream.”

“You don’t have to tell us any details, Harry,” Hermione said, “Can you remember when you had this dream?”

“Well during the summer... right before Tonks got my day watch,” Harry said feeling a little stupid.

Tonks cast a quick glance over at Fleur and then over at Harry. Harry had never seen Tonks show any kind of auror abilities before but at that moment she looked as serious as Mad-eye Moody.

“Hmm that’s very interesting. Do you have anymore questions Hermione,” Tonks said abruptly.

“Oh,” Hermione relied uncertainly, “Well that’s the last... I don’t suppose you can remember the date you had this dream Harry?”

“Err... no but that was the first day we walked...”

“It was a nice day,” Tonks interrupted Harry meaningfully.

Harry stared at Tonks for a moment but then realisation dawned on him, he had dreamed of Gabrielle dying. Harry glanced over at Fleur nervously he didn't want to tear that up now.

"A nice day... Remember anything more, any news you talked about for example?" Hermione asked.

"No," Chorused Tonks and Harry.

"Do you think I'm stupid or something?" Fleur asked sadly, staring down at the red carpet, "Gabrielle died early morning the 2nd of July. Mum and dad died the 1st."

Tonks cast an accusing glance over at them and put an arm around Fleur for comfort. Harry wanted to run over to Fleur and hug her hard but he knew she wouldn't appreciate that.

The following day right before lunch Harry and Fleur went down to meet Nancy, she would be flooing to Hogsmeade where a carriage would meet her and take her up to Hogwarts.

"Think something has happened?" Fleur asked nervously, "She's late."

"Calm down, she is only a few minutes late," Harry said comfortably. They were standing on the steps of the short stair leading to the huge doors to the entrance hall, enjoying the first warming sunshine of the year.

"I know, I just get worried easily these days," Fleur said apologetically.

"It's all right," Harry said and turned his face towards the sun for warmth.

Fleur turned her head towards the sun as well, "I haven't told her about us yet."

"Oh..." Harry said suddenly feeling very nervous, "Do you think she still wants to see me? I mean it will be kind of awkward, won't it? She's your aunt after all."



"She is still Nancy," Fleur stated firmly, "And you are still Harry."

After a few moments of silence they could hear a carriage approaching. Fleur looked sadly at the Thestral as it pulled the carriage closer. Harry knew the only person Fleur had seen die was Gabrielle. He couldn't help grabbing Fleur's hand to comfort her. To his relief Fleur didn't pull away instead squeezed back. The powerful feeling was there as it always had been.

Harry let go of her a few moments later and walked down to the carriage and opened the door when it came to a halt.

"Hello Harry," Someone from inside the carriage said but it wasn't Nancy. It was Remus Harry realised when his old teacher stepped out.

"Remus?" Harry asked he had no idea Remus would be so soon.

"Where is Nancy?" Fleur asked nervously, "Has something happened?"

"Don't worry dear I'm perfectly fine," Nancy said stepping out of the carriage, "Apparently Lupin here was sent to escort me. Can you imagine? We haven't seen each other for twenty years and the moment I set foot in England again he is there."

There was no amusement in Nancy's voice; she appeared to be quite angry at whoever decided she needed Remus as an escort.

"Do you want to come inside and settle in?" Fleur asked as the teacher she after all was.

"Yes that would be good and we need to report to Albus Dumbledore as well," said Remus appreciatively. Nancy made her suitcase float after her and they entered the castle.

"Just to make sure," Fleur said hesitantly and glanced over at Remus, "What happened to Mrs Black?"

“Her canvas was burned by a temperamental young lady,” Remus replied confidently, “And I do appreciate that you stick to the procedures, Fleur.”

Fleur smiled faintly.

“Procedures?” Nancy asked she had no idea what the order of the phoenix was.

“Yes, I expect Dumbledore to fill you in on those details later on,” Remus replied. Harry and Fleur exchange a smile they both hoped Nancy would be made a member.

As they walked towards the guest rooms on sixth floor Peeves glided out a class room right in front of them. Peeves smiled widely at the sight of Nancy and Lupin.

“Loopy Lupin and Loony Lyon...” Peeves begun singing but was cut off by Nancy who was blasting him with her veela charm.

“Oh Peevie you don’t sing rude songs about me do you?” Nancy asked softly. Unlike when Fleur used her veela charm Nancy had a more mesmerizing appearance. Harry realised he was gaping at her he couldn’t help it; it was like the imperius. After a few seconds Harry regained some of his senses and managed to turn away.

“W-W-Well I... I was just-just joking nice to see you again Miss Lyon,” Peeves stammered, “Can I help you?”

“You are so sweet Peevsie why don’t you just glide along,” Nancy cooed and Peeves disappeared down a hallway.

“That was brilliant,” Harry exclaimed, “But don’t do that in front of me at least give me a warning first.”

“Sorry Harry,” Nancy said and darted a look towards Remus who closed his gaping mouth quickly. Apparently, Remus had not been able to turn away from Nancy as Harry had. He wondered whether Nancy had done it on purpose just to make Remus look stupid, it would be something Fleur might do.

“Right,” Remus said angrily, “Let’s go on.”

“Actually,” Fleur said meaningfully, “I think I need to have a word with Harry.”

“Oh I am so sorry Fleur I didn’t think. I am really sorry I didn’t mean to do that to Harry you know he just got in the way and you know he couldn’t help it it’s just like the imperious,” Nancy apologised desperately.

“It’s not that. To be honest we broke up at my birthday,” Fleur said quickly and tried to smile reassuringly.

Nancy and Remus looked back and forth between Harry and Fleur as if trying to see a reason.

“See you in a bit then,” Fleur said hesitantly. She grabbed Harry’s hand and pulled him away from her aunt and Remus before they had a chance to ask why.

“What?” Harry asked when Fleur pulled him around a corner and stopped.

“Shh! Summon your dad’s cloak and be quiet,” Fleur said and let go of Harry’s hand so he could pull out his wand.

“Accio Invisibility cloak,” Harry said quietly but firmly.

“You don’t actually plan on spying on them?” Harry asked disbelievingly.

“No, but we have to make sure they get along at least,” Fleur said excitedly, “I think there is hope she wouldn’t have blasted him like that otherwise.”

“So she didn’t do it just because Peeves was there?”

“No, do you have any idea how exhausting it is to use veela charm like that? I’ve only done it once and I won’t do it again... but it’s easier for Nancy because she’s twice the veela I am,” Fleur explained silently.

“So it’s easy for pure veela?” Harry asked too keep their conversation going.

“Not easy but they can hold out for a couple of hours if they really need too,” Fleur said as the cloak came soaring into Harry’s hands. Harry gulped at the thought of why a veela would have to hold out for a couple of hours.

With a wave of her wand, Fleur had silenced their shoes so that they wouldn’t make any sound no matter how hard and noisily they walked.

They both froze as they realised how close they would have to be to fit under the cloak. There was an awkward silence but then both of them took a step closer to each other and Harry covered them with the cloak.

They ran after them towards the sixth floor, Fleur knew which room Nancy would get so they didn’t have to be afraid to lose them. Once they reached the sixth floor and headed down a corridor towards the guestrooms, they caught up.

“Guestroom three,” Remus said looking at a door, “This is it.”

“Right and how am I supposed to get in?” Nancy asked irritably.

“I don’t think it is locked,” Remus replied and opened the door smoothly. Nancy’s cheeks turned slightly pink.

“That was low,” Remus said abruptly, “And don’t even pretend you did that to get rid of Peeves you know very well I can deal with him if needed.”

Nancy snorted and said coolly, “I just wanted to get rid of him quickly.”

“I see,” Remus said just as coolly, “So you just forgot me and Harry was present as well?”

“Yes!” Nancy snapped.

“She’s lying,” Fleur whispered silently.

Remus knew better then to reply and stayed quiet.

“Look has Harry told you anything?” Nancy asked after a moment.

“Of what?” Remus asked.

“Of why they broke up, I don’t understand it. Fleur has been dreaming of someone like Harry for years and they seemed so happy together,” Nancy said worriedly.

Harry and Fleur awkwardly tried to put as much space between them as possible under the cloak. They both knew Nancy was right in a way and it hurt them. But there was nothing Harry could do except hope that he could one day love Fleur the way she deserved.

“I am afraid I don’t know anything more then you,” Remus replied gently, “But I shouldn’t worry too much. Potters tend to fall once and hard and especially for temperamental girls.”

Harry felt his cheeks burn.

“I see you have become wise on old days,” Nancy stated.

“She’s flirting,” Fleur whispered enthusiastically.

“I am not sure about that though, hopefully I am wiser since we saw each other last time,” Remus said and Nancy stiffened at the memory.

Fleur groaned, apparently this was a tactical mistake on Remus’s part.

“I know it is no good now. But I want you too know that I realise that I should have told you what I am,” Remus said, “I apologise.”

“You are right it is no good,” Nancy said and made her luggage float inside, “Goodbye Remus.”

Nancy closed the door with out waiting for Remus to reply.

“No flames,” Remus muttered and disappeared behind a tapestry probably heading towards Dumbledore’s office.

"It would have been better if she had flamed him," Fleur said sadly, "But we won't give up yet."

"I thought it went rather well," Harry said.

"Yeah I thought so too but the way she said goodbye it was just so vain of emotions anything would have been better then that," Fleur explained sadly, "As if Remus really doesn't matter to her at all."

"But she did flirt," Harry pointed out.

"Well... I think that may have been a veela thing nothing real," Fleur said hesitantly.

"How could that be a veela thing?" Harry asked knowing fully well that Fleur wasn't too keen on answering.

"You know that veela rumour about seducing boys?" Fleur asked awkwardly.

Harry nodded.

"It's not entirely a rumour you see," Fleur said and Harry waited for her to go on, "I don't suffer from it but Nancy does."

"Nancy needs to erm... seduce boys?" Harry asked incredulously, "Are you joking?"

"Oh no of course she doesn't need to seduce them," Fleur said quickly, "It's nothing like that not even pure veela needs to do that."

"But then what?"

"Well you saw it. It just comes out of her. Normally it's just a smile or something but I bet she felt exhausted after Peeves and needed a little more," Fleur explained.

"But shouldn't it be the other way around?" Harry asked, "Shouldn't she feel tired and don't feel like smiling?"

"Well it's a bit embarrassing so don't go tell everyone if they don't know it," Fleur said blushing slightly, "The male doesn't even notice of course but it's like... well... smelling them and it feels refreshing."

"With your nose?" Harry asked uncertainly.

"No not literary," Fleur said, "I just don't know how to explain the feeling."

"You do this often?" Harry asked wondering just how he might smell to a veela.

"No, I don't need to do it."

"Have you done that with me?"

Fleur blushed slightly, "Well I slipped a couple of times... it's hard because you are good."

"Better than Ron?" Harry asked jokingly.

"I never did that to him that would be gross," Fleur said indignantly, "I only slip if I like the boy and besides Ron is Hermione's."

"Magical creatures," Harry muttered and shook his head pityingly.

"Class four dangerous beasts if you please," Fleur joked, "Come on let's go see Nancy."

Harry folded the cloak neatly and banished it back to his dormitory before they knocked on Nancy's door.

"Who is it?" Nancy yelled from inside but didn't wait for an answer before opening the door.

"I told you this was the right room," Fleur told Harry probably to wipe away any suspicion Nancy might have of them trying to set her up with Remus.

"Hey I said number three and this is number three," Harry retorted just for fun.

"Whatever," Fleur said pretending to ignore him, "We were just wondering if you found your room okay."

"Just fine," Nancy said and let them in. The room was not quite as spectacular as their room had been in Beauxbaton but it came close.

"You two didn't know Remus would be coming did you?" Nancy asked narrowing her eyes at them.

"Well," Fleur said guiltily, "Yes we did know."

"And I suppose you thought it convenient to let us share carriage since we all know I can't take care of myself," Nancy went on.

"You will have to ask Dumbledore about that," Fleur said defensively. Harry had to force down a grin when he realised Dumbledore probably tried to set them up as well.

"Right I am sorry," Nancy said and enveloped Fleur in a tight hug, "It's so good to see you again. You have no idea how much I've missed you."

"I've missed you too," Fleur said and hugged back.

"So what happened?" Nancy asked looking over at Harry briefly.

"Our private life didn't work," Fleur said, she had a very open relationship with her aunt and didn't mind discussing embarrassing private details with her.

"That's it?" Nancy asked incredulously, "You gave up what you had because of that?"

"No," Fleur said, "Not like that. We didn't have a private life. We barely kissed each other maybe twenty real kisses totally in six months."

"But why? Both of you brush your teeth and neither of you is ugly."

"It never felt special," Harry said hoping his embarrassment of the conversation would go away if he embraced it. It worked fairly well.



"But you always used to think it was at least refreshing," Nancy told Fleur who blushed badly. Harry pretended not to notice.

"All right as long as you are happy," Nancy sighed, "Now let's go down for lunch I've missed the great hall, don't tell Maxime but Beauxbaton's great hall is not just the same league."

"If we hurry we may still catch Tonks and everyone else," Fleur said happily and they were on their way towards the great hall.

Nancy stopped every now and then to comment on an old memory or to say a few words to a painting. Nancy even stopped and pulled them along a secret passage just for the fun of it even though it wasn't a shortcut.

"Nancy," Fleur said in the middle of the secret passage and stopped.

"Yes?" Nancy asked and turned to her niece.

"We have to tell you something odd," Fleur muttered.

"What is it darling?" Nancy asked.

"Remember what I wrote about Harry?"

"Which part? You have written quite a few rolls of parchment on the subject."

Harry felt a tingle in his cheeks but neither of the women noticed. Fleur told her aunt of all the odd things between her and Harry and also of Hermione's medical research. Nancy wasn't sure what to think but seemed to take their word for it. Nancy continued to ask questions all the way down to the great hall, Harry and Fleur answered them the best they could.

When they entered the great hall Nancy forgot all about it instead she glanced up at the magical ceiling and smiled a watery smile. Dumbledore stood up in his chair and the few students left in the school fell quiet.

"May I introduce you all to Madam Lyon, Professor Delacour's aunt and charms teacher at Beauxbaton's Academy of Magic," Dumbledore announced, "I would ask you all to help Madam Lyon find her way around the castle but I assume you remember all the more important passages."

"Perfectly well Albus," Nancy replied happily, "I do have an inborn sense of direction as you may remember."

"Yes of course you have," Dumbledore chuckled and cast a glance over at Snape, "I don't think anyone of us would forget that."

"I always thought it was Voldemort who gave Snape his dark mark," Harry whispered to Fleur who giggled.

"That would be a sight if the next dark lord is a part veela," Fleur replied.

"We are doomed Voldemort is one thing but a part veela..." Harry trailed off pretending to be too scared to finish the sentence.

"Watch it Potter," Fleur warned him teasingly.

"Or what, you'll turn dark?" Harry retorted.

"I'll just go introduce myself then," Nancy interrupted their argument, "I know most of the teacher all ready anyway."

Harry was left alone to walk over towards the Gryffindor table where his friends sat. He thought about what had happened between him and Fleur. They had been joking again just as usual; perhaps being friends wasn't too bad. It was at least bearable.

He was pleasantly surprised, to see that Ginny was in a good enough mood to eat with them.

"So that is the famous Nancy," Hermione said.

"She is so beautiful," Selena said enviously, "Almost like Fleur."

"Yeah tell me about it she blasted me, Remus and Peeves senseless!"

"She got Peeves?" Ron asked enthusiastically, "Why?"

"Well Peeves starting to sing a song about her and Remus probably since their school days and she just blasted him and made him behave and go away," Harry told his friends.

"I wish I could have seen that," Ron said.

"No you don't it's like the imperius I managed to turn away but Remus just stood there gaping at her. And Remus can throw off the imperius you know," Harry said.

"Maybe he could have turned around but didn't want to," Selena said and both she and Hermione giggled.

Ron must have influenced Hermione somehow because she had not been this prone to giggle before they became a couple Harry figured. Actually now that Harry thought of it, Hermione had changed quite a lot since she got together with Ron she was much more patient and content.

Ron had changed as well but not as much the only big thing was that he was much more confident and that he no longer felt like he had to compare himself with Harry or his brothers. Harry knew Ron was happy and felt special as long as Hermione loved him.

"What are you thinking mate?" Ron asked.

"Just how much we have all changed... you and Hermione and all," Harry explained, he didn't dare mention the fact that Ginny had changed while she was so close.

"You've changed too," Ron replied seriously, "You used to be ashamed about being a parselmouth for one thing."

"It isn't the most glamorous talent," Harry said.

"It's a talent nevertheless," Hermione said and Selena nodded.

Harry couldn't help smiling at his friends.

Mmm, wonder how many burn marks Snape might have? lol.

I am sorry if things seem messy in this chapter but all I can think of at the moment is sleep.

I would of course be really happy if I had reviews when I woke up!

## Chapter 34 Lily Selena Tonks

Hermione's eager to solve the mystery of Harry and Fleur's connection had infested them all. After lunch they invited Remus and Nancy to Gryffindor tower to ask them if they knew anything that might help them. They were particularly interested in what Remus might say since he was the only one who knew that the Delacours had visited the Potters. Remus and Nancy were not too happy about having to see each other so soon again but they didn't say anything.

It was not usual for Selena to run around in school on her own but except for her and Ginny Harry's friends gathered in the common room. Hermione seated herself happily at one of the tables and started telling Remus all the details about Harry and Fleur's connection.

"Have you informed Dumbledore of this?" Remus asked as soon he had gotten all the facts strait.

"No... but he knows some part of it," Fleur replied, "If I know Dumbledore as well as I think I do, he already knows enough and if he didn't he would ask."

"Yes probably," Remus said after a moment, "I am afraid I can't help you right away this is a very precise branch of magic and I will need to read up on it."

"That would be nice but that was not why we asked you two to come," Hermione said looking through her notes, "We understand Delacours and the Potters met 1980 or 1981 at least on one occasion."

"They did?" Nancy asked, "Are you sure? They never told me anything."

"Yes they did meet," Remus answered, "It must have been in May 1981. I don't think they met more then once but as I told you before Harry people didn't tell each other much back then. I suppose it could have been more then once."

"Madam Lyon can you remember anything from that time?" Hermione asked when she had scribbled down what Remus has told them.

Nancy suddenly looked pale, "I think there may have been a magical accident. Fleur's mother used to have a wand with a veela hair as core but it broke on the trip and she got a new one in London."

"It broke?" Hermione asked enthusiastically, "Do you remember if it snapped, cracked or by other physical means exceeded to function properly?"

"Hermione," Ron burst out, "Why can't you just ask: do you know why it broke?"

Hermione huffed, "These are the official classifications of damaged wands."

"Why did you have to learn that?" Ron groaned.

"They could be a part of our Newts in History of Magic or Charms," Hermione explained with her nose so high in the air that she didn't even notice Ron rolling his eyes.

"It snapped," Fleur stated making everyone look over at her, "I think I accidentally broke it but I don't remember too well I was only four at the time."

"A four year old can't break a wand, I would know," Tonks said dismissively.

"I don't know how I did it, but I remember a feeling or I think I do it's very vague but I think I felt guilty," Fleur explained.

"Do you remember anything else?" Hermione asked, "Where you outside or inside?"

"Inside," Fleur said uncertainly and Hermione continued to scribble.

"Right so this is what I think happened." Hermione said proudly after a moment, "In May 1981 the Delacours visited the Potters for an unknown reason in their home. There was a magic accident that may be related to the fact that Mrs Delacour transformed and tried to flame Mr Potter. The magical accident resulted in the snapping of Mrs Delacour's wand."

Hermione took a deep breath before she continued, "However I believe that when the wand snapped Fleur got hit by some sort of magic that affected her feelings. I also guess Harry was somewhere near, perhaps even playing with Fleur and got hit as well."

Harry didn't know how to feel about this, he was confused.

"That is quite a theory," Remus said thinking it over, "You are aware how rare this particular magical effect is especially as it probably was an accident with common household magic."

"Yes," Hermione replied, "But I can't come up with anything better, we just have the fact that something must have made Harry and Fleur the way they are before they met last summer and probably before the tri wizard tournament as well."

"I could ask Ollivander if he can remember if Mrs Delacour mentioned the reason she needed a new wand," Remus said thoughtfully. He seemed to accept Hermione's theory in lack of a better one, "Unfortunately I won't be able to ask until the summer holiday."

"Are you going on a mission?" Harry asked, hoping to hear something about what the order was doing and changing the topic.

"I am afraid I can not tell you," Remus said apologetically.

"Is it dangerous?" Ron asked.

Fleur caught Harry's eyes and nodded discreetly towards Nancy. Nancy had fixed Remus with her gaze and watched him carefully. Her expression wasn't easy to read but Harry knew her well enough to know that she was very worried about Remus's safety.

"You are going to make sure you are safe Remus won't you?" Fleur asked worriedly. Harry had a very hard time keeping his face straight. Fleur was making the risks Remus took seem much larger than they really were.

Harry forced a worried look, "So when will we see you again?" He asked as if it wasn't sure they would ever see each other again.

Nancy's expression hardened slightly and she looked even more worried.

"It is a perfectly safe mission," Remus reassured them.

"Of course it is," Fleur agreed quickly, making the mission seem very dangerous.

"Yes we know Dumbledore wouldn't let you take any risks intentionally," Harry added reassuringly, pronouncing the word 'intentionally' slightly clearer than the rest.

"Besides hardly any order members have died," Fleur said matter-of-factly.

Nancy had now gone pale. She like Fleur had developed a tendency to expect the worst and now probably expected Remus to die.

Remus was just about to reassure everyone that there really was no danger when the portrait opened.

"Hi Selena," Harry called, interrupting Remus successfully.

"Hi Harry," Selena replied and glanced around at everyone else, "Uh... I have to talk to you, but it's okay if you don't have time... I can wait."

Fleur caught the moment, "It's okay we are just done here. Tonks and I have to decorate the great hall for Easter... prefects are asked to help as well."

"Right come on Ron," Hermione said catching on.

Soon Remus and Nancy were left alone in Gryffindor common room. A place they both probably had very special memories from Harry figured.

"She's hooked!" Fleur exclaimed when the fat Lady closed behind them.

"You were great," Harry said enthusiastically.



"Thanks, but it was all luck. And thank you Ron!" Fleur said and gave Ron a quick hug.

It took some explanations until Ron, Hermione, Tonks and Selena understood what had happened. None of them had even noticed that Nancy was worried.

As they had said they were going to decorate the great hall they didn't have much choice. Harry and Selena got away however and walked outside. Selena was in a very good mood and she skipped down the stairs.

Harry smiled at her, "So, what did you want to talk to me about?"

Selena grinned back she was very pleased with herself for some reason, "You know that day when you had breakfast with Ginny?"

"Yeah," Harry said following her away towards the Quidditch pitch.

"Hermione was right," Selena said happily, "Ginny is hiding something."

"Oh... has she told you?" Harry asked.

Selena lost her smile and looked down, "No, I figured it out another way."

"That's okay," Harry said comfortingly.

"I followed her," Selena said looking uncertainly back up at him.

"Oh," Harry replied, "And what did you find out?"

Selena regained her smile, "After lunch she headed strait off towards the hospital wing and she got dreamless sleep potions... she has been using them for a long time too."

"Ginny uses dreamless sleep potions?" Harry asked.

"Yes, and I looked them up in the library on my way back to Gryffindor tower," Selena said quickly, "if you take them for a really

long time they can make you touchy... I don't remember what the book said exactly but it was something like that."

"Are you sure?" Harry asked enthusiastically, "Did you hear what Madam Pomfrey said?"

Selena nodded, "She said that Ginny should be careful but she was very gentle not at all like she usually is... she must have really horrible dreams."

Harry nodded; he understood the dreams must be bad if someone like Ginny choose to take potions against them.

"I'm impressed," Harry praised, "Not even Hermione could figure that out."

"Thanks Harry," Selena said and hugged him quickly around his middle. Harry ruffled her hair but stopped abruptly. He had never done anything like that before.

Selena didn't seem to notice however when she pulled away.

"Err... feel up for some Quidditch?" Harry asked, "I can summon our brooms and Ron's Quaffle."

"Yes," Selena said happily.

Selena enjoyed flying as much as Harry did and they had an unusually funny game together since they hadn't played for so long.

It was one of the best days for Harry in a very long time. Everything had gone right. They had found out about his connection with Fleur, managed to set Remus and Nancy up and Selena had figured out why Ginny was moody. To top it all off Harry played Quidditch and had a wonderful evening with his friends.

To everyone's disappointment Remus left the following day after breakfast. Nancy didn't say goodbye to him quite as warmly as they had hoped but she was definitely not mad at him anymore.

Selena spent most of her holiday with Tonks doing all kinds of stuff that normally was extremely forbidden for students such as sneaking off to Hogsmeade or brewing dangerous potions.

One potion they brew was extra spectacular it would cause the gravity to reverse for the drinker. So Selena and Tonks ran around in the ceilings of Hogwarts upside down. To Mr Filch anger they had poured some of the potion in Mrs Norris fur. Mrs Norris of course, being a cat had, licked the potion up and been forced to join the two girls.

McGonagall had not been pleased with Selena's behaviour but didn't say anything since Tonks was a professor. Tonks also made her utmost to include Ginny in their adventures but she refused flatly and claimed that she needed to study for her OWLs.

Harry had only told Ron and Hermione about Ginny taking dreamless sleep potion. The three of them had then decided not to tell anyone more since they all trusted Madam Pomfrey to take care of Ginny.

Harry spent his free time with either Fleur and Nancy or Ron and Hermione. He also tried to offer Ginny help with her studies but she had just snarled at him that she didn't need help. Harry wasn't bothered with her behaviour at all anymore and only smiled.

Much too soon the holiday was over and Nancy had to return to Beauxbaton. The remaining Gryffindors except Ginny had gathered outside the entrance hall together with Fleur, Tonks and Dumbledore to say goodbye.

"I trust we will see each other soon, Nancy?" Dumbledore said.

"Yes I believe we will," Nancy replied.

Harry, Ron and Hermione gave each other a significant look there was only one reason they could think of that they would see each other soon and that was that Nancy had become an Order member. They had all suspected it of course but since they were still students and not of age even Fleur wouldn't discuss the matter with them.

"See you soon love," Nancy murmured as she hugged Fleur Harry was the only one standing close enough to over hear.

"I'll miss you anyway," Fleur murmured back.

"Take care and be nice to the students especially the boys," Nancy said teasingly.

"I will," Fleur promised.

"Come here Harry," Nancy said and held her arms open for him.

"I never thanked you for helping Fleur through everything," Nancy whispered in his ear and hugged him hard.

"She helped me as much as I helped her," Harry whispered back

"Thank you anyway," Nancy said and broke the hug.

The rest of them said their goodbyes and soon Nancy's carriage was out of view.

"Now before the students return I have a few matters to discuss with you, Selena and if you like Harry and Tonks may accompany you," Dumbledore said seriously.

"About what, Profess... Albus?" Tonks asked she had loads of troubles calling Dumbledore his first name. She claimed that she had actually spent more time with him getting detentions in his office then she had gone to classes and was far too used calling him Professor Dumbledore.

"I received a letter from Mr Zabulus Malfoy Selena's father this morning that I would like too discus with the three of you," Dumbledore said.

"I'll see you later," Harry called to his two best friends and Fleur before he walked off towards Dumbledore's office. Selena was very pale Harry noticed. He and Tonks exchanged a worried glance.

"Don't worry darling I won't let anything happen," Tonks cooed and held Selena's little hand.

Selena managed a small smile even though she was almost petrified. The walk up to Dumbledore's office seemed very long. Dumbledore walked ahead of them and they walked on a line with Selena in the middle.

Harry was very worried; he wondered what Selena's parents had written in that letter. Harry supposed it could be bad, they were her parents after all and could force Selena to do whatever they wanted. Harry didn't come out of his thoughts until Dumbledore asked them to sit down in his office.

"Have a Chocolate frog Selena?" Dumbledore asked and held out a package, "If you are lucky you will get someone more exiting then me."

"Thanks," Selena said and took a chocolate frog. Harry noticed that Selena's hands were shaking as she unwrapped it.

"Mr Zabulus Malfoy informed me today that that you was specifically told to go home over the Easter," Dumbledore told Selena.

"Yes" Selena confirmed she sat stiffly up in her chair as if waiting to be executed, her chocolate frog forgotten in her hand.

"I also understand that you did not reply to the letter in which he asks you to come home?"

"Yes," Selena croaked and tears started to fall from her blue eyes, "I don't want to go back, they would never let me return they would just ship me off to Dermstrang but I like being a Gryffindor and they can't make me."

Dumbledore reached for a napkin to hand Selena but Tonks was quicker.

"Your father writes that if you don't return home now at once you are no longer welcome and no longer a Malfoy," Dumbledore said seriously the usual twinkle in his eyes completely gone.

"That's it?" Selena asked hopefully, "They won't force me?"

"It appears as they have given you a choice" Dumbledore said gently.

"So I can come back here after the summer?" Selena asked.

"If that is what you choose" Dumbledore said.

"Yes!" Selena exclaimed, "I choose that! Can make up my own name? You said I was no longer a Malfoy so can I be a... whoever I want to be?"

Dumbledore chuckled, "Yes of course you can be who ever you want to be but there are certain technicalities."

"Don't worry about that I can take care of my self I could... uh live in London... and then I could get a job maybe so I can pay for my books or I could sell my broom. It's still worth enough I better put up notes right away so I can sell it before we leave for the summer."

Harry looked sadly on as Selena happily wanted to sell her most precious possession, her broom, so that she could pay for school books and come back for her second year. Harry knew exactly how she was feeling she reminded him of him at that age. He knew what it was like to feel alone without parents.

"We won't let you do that," Tonks exclaimed with tears in her eyes, "You are going to stay with me and I will pay for your school books and robes it's not your fault your sorry excuses for parents aren't there for you! And next year you will come back here just like any normal girl."

Selena looked startled, "But I can take care of myself..."

"No you can not you are twelve!" Tonks said forcefully.

"This is precisely why I asked you and Harry to accompany Selena," Dumbledore said pleasantly, "I wanted to ask you to become Selena's legal guardians, it will do with one of you but as being a guardian is a huge responsibility, especially these days..."

"I will do it!" Tonks interrupted Dumbledore.

Harry was not sure what to say he had never considered nor expected this. He tried to think rationally at it and it help somewhat. He didn't know exactly what would be expected of him as a guardian. He supposed that technically, he had all the money needed and she could stay at Grimmauld place, it was his and Remus's house after all.

"Is that safe, professor?" Harry asked, "Selena has already once been exposed because of me."

"It would not be safe," Dumbledore said thoughtfully, "But as it would not make matters any worse."

"But Professor," Selena said abruptly, "Are you sure my father really means it could he not just write that to scare me enough so I will go home?"

"I expect as much," Selena's face fell, "but as he gave his word in this letter and I intent to make him keep it." Dumbledore said forcefully, "You may do whatever you wish."

None of them argued this point with Dumbledore and Harry continued turning the aspect of being a guardian over in his head. He glanced down at Selena and saw her tear streaked face, he knew then that even if he wasn't her legal guardian, he would always be her guardian.

"Yes," He said abruptly, "I want to be your guardian as well, if you don't mind having me that is."

Selena smiled and nodded vigorously.

"Are you sure?" Dumbledore asked, "You will both be responsible for Selena until the day she becomes seventeen. And that I can assure you, is not something to be taken lightly even with children as well behaved as Selena."

"I am sure," Tonks said proudly.

"Me too," Harry said.

“Excellent!” Dumbledore said when and stood up so quickly that that they all startled, “As guardians of Miss Selena who-ever-she-wishes you are welcome here at anytime to discuss Selena’s education and grades. Good luck on figuring out who you want to be, Selena.”

“Thank you Professor,” Selena replied.

Dumbledore nodded happily in reply and the three left his office.

“I suppose we have to start arguing about your allowance now don’t we?” Tonks asked Selena.

“You don’t have to” Selena said at once.

“Sorry, but it’s something that comes with the guardian part,” Tonks said, “Hmm... let’s see... I used to get four sickles a week when I was your age, will that do?”

“You don’t have to give four sickles every week,” Selena said quickly.

“She won’t have to I’ll give you half of it,” Harry said happily.

“But I am happy with out it!”

“You may be so,” Tonks said smiling brightly, “But no one is going to tell me I don’t take proper care of you.”

“Thanks,” Selena muttered.

They walked in silence for several minutes all three of them deep in thought.

“Tonks?” Selena asked carefully.

“Yeah?” Tonks replied.

“Would you mind very much if... if...” Selena trailed off.

“Yes,” Tonks asked gently.

“I was just wondering if I you won’t mind if I... choose Tonks?” Selena asked.



“Choose me?” Tonks asked wrinkling her forehead for a second but then her eyes went wide, “Are you sure?”

“Well, yes but if you don’t want me to that’s okay I can think of another name,” Selena said nervously.

“No let’s hear it out... Selena Bellatrix Tonks,” Tonks said pronouncing the name very clearly.

“No Bellatrix goes, I don’t want to be named after her I can be whoever I want to be,” Selena said enjoying her newfound freedom immensely.

“Just Selena Tonks? It sounds well enough but there usually are at least three names.” Tonks pointed out.

Selena turned to face Harry with a very nervous expression.

“You can use any of my names,” Harry offered happily, “But I don’t think Selena Harry Tonks would sound very well, not to be rude but people might even think it’s a bit stupid.”

Selena giggled, “Not your name I was thinking of your...” She took a breath, “I was thinking Lily Selena Tonks... but it it’s just a thought.”

“After my mother?” Harry asked stupidly he had not actually expected her to want to be named after his mother.

“I know it’s stupid I just thought it sounds nice and since you are... I know this is pathetic... but anyway...” Selena swallowed nervously, “I think you should be named after your family and you are the closest thing to a family I got.”

“She would have been honoured,” Harry said and even though he never knew his mother he knew she would.

“So it’s okay then,” Selena asked.

“Yes,” Harry said, “Lily Selena Tonks... but I figure you will have a couple of months to make really sure before all the paper work gets done.”

"We got to celebrate," Tonks said happily, "I can't wait to tell everyone that someone actually wanted to be named after me... think I should announce it in the great hall at the feast tonight?"

"Alright," Selena said, "I can't wait to see my cous... that Malfoy git's face!"

"That's the spirit," Tonks said happily, "Let's go down to the kitchens and order a party up to the office."

As Tonks said she would, she stood up when Dumbledore was done with his short welcome to all the students who had arrived back from the holyday. Harry had agreed to not tell his friends anything until after Tonks announcement.

"Come on give us a clue?" Ron pleaded for the fifty-sevenths time.

"Has something happened to Selena's parents?" Hermione whispered to Harry so that Selena wouldn't overhear since she was sitting close by.

"Tonks is going to announce something," Harry said gesturing over at the staff table.

"You know what she is going to tell us don't you?" Ron asked, "Is it about the dueling club?"

"Voldemort," Tonks said suddenly and the great hall was shocked in to silence at once, "Good now that I got your attention I have a little announcement to make."

Tonks paused dramatically and the entire great hall was silent, "The Gryffindor girl you knew as Selena Bellatrix Malfoy is gone."

"No she isn't!" Ron exclaimed loudly, "She's right here!"

Everyone in the great hall turned to look at Selena.

"No Mr Weasley that would be from today and fourth Miss Lily Selena Tonks," Tonks said smiling smugly, "Thank you... Headmaster may I say dig in?"

Dumbledore nodded, "Thanks... Dig in!" Tonks said.

"Lily Selena Tonks?" Hermione asked.

"Uh-huh?" Selena said proudly, "Nice isn't it?"

"You changed your name?" Ron asked, "Won't your parents be kind of furious?"

"No they disowned me so I got to choose a new name," Selena said still very proudly, "Lily after Harry's mother and Tonks after Tonks of course."

"That went fast," Ron said starting to pile food on his plate and taking a swig of pumpkin juice.

"I know and I'm so happy I didn't know what to do this summer but then Harry and Tonks adopted me!" Selena said and Harry beamed proudly at her.

"Wh..." Ron started but as he was drinking at the time he started coughing violently.

"Ron?" Hermione said, thumping him in the back.

"You adopted her?" Lavender asked eagerly from down the table.

"Yeah, well me and Tonks," Harry replied.

"Just like that?" Hermione asked bewildered.

"Well we haven't filled out any papers yet," Harry said.

"And they are only technically adopting me it's not like Harry will be my father that would just be too weird," Selena said she couldn't stop smiling, "They are just guardians."

"But you aren't of age," Hermione said, "You are only sixteen."

"We don't expect the ministry to be done with the paperwork until after my birthday," Harry replied, "And since that is formalities it doesn't really matter anyway."

"No I suppose not," Hermione said and a smile spread over her lips.

"Better not let the twins find out they have been waiting for something like this since those ties at Christmas," Ron warned him.

"Ron!" Hermione scolded at once, "Harry doesn't have to be ashamed of anything he is very mature to take that kind of responsibility."

"Say that to the twins," Ron said severely, "They'll laugh themselves to death."

"Have they always been this way or just since they fell in love?" Selena asked Harry.

"Always," Harry said, "It started on the train in our first year."

Selena giggled a lot as Harry told her about all the silly arguments Ron and Hermione had fought. Ron and Hermione didn't notice of course they were too caught up bickering. She was especially amused when Harry told her about how Hermione had gone with Viktor Krum to the Yule Ball.

"Harry?" Selena asked, "Where will I live this summer? Do you know where Tonks lives or will your aunt and uncle let me stay with them as well?"

"Tonks used to have a flat in Diagon Alley but she sold it when she started working here so I suppose you would have to stay with her in a house I inherited a while ago unless she gets another apartment," Harry answered, "Don't worry about it, it will be somewhere nice."

"I don't worry about it I was just curious," Selena said happily.

When the feast was over Selena and some of her first year friends together with Harry, Ron, Hermione, Fleur and Tonks had a toast in their office for Selena's new life.

Loads of events in this chapter... things are clearing up a bit.

So what do you think of Lily Selena Tonks... quite a name for a biological Malfoy isn't it? It went a little fast perhaps with the guardian

part. On the other hand, Harry doesn't turn down a chance to expand his family. The real question is perhaps, why did Dumbledore think of Harry as a guardian and not Remus or the Weasleys?

Then we have the broken wand and Remus and Nancy part as well in this chapter. I am really curious to hear what you all thought....

Next chapter: **End of Term**

## Chapter 35 End of Term

Had Harry not been Ron and Hermione's best friend, the end of term would much more enjoyable or at least as enjoyable the end of terms can be with all the exams. The more homework and final preparations the teachers made them do the more Hermione made him and Ron do. The more Ron complained and patronize Hermione the more he baited her even more into forcing them to do school work. Had it been any previous year Harry and Ron would have put up a united front against her but this year Ron was not able too, Hermione had ways of making Ron do things against his will.

This left Harry alone to defend his saner study habits. Unfortunately, Fleur agreed with Hermione. Harry soon gave in and found himself spending all his free times together with his best friends studying. It wasn't too bad studying with his best friends Ron always cracked a joke and managed to keep the humour up and Hermione knew loads of stuff that made their work much easier.

However there was also a down side with studying with Ron and Hermione. Whenever Ron got bored enough he would start flirting with Hermione and much too often for Harry's liking Hermione flirted back.

Vertex noticed Harry's change of study habits and usually met him in the library after lunch. Even though Vertex couldn't read he was deeply fascinated by books, perhaps because Harry paid so much attention to them. The odd thing was that Vertex seemed to like old enchanted books much better then new cheap books.

Hermione noticed this as well and explained that Vertex is a phoenix and that phoenixes senses magic and therefore he liked the old enchanted books because they were so full of it. Some of the reasons are because the books were enchanted to begin with and partly because they had absorbed magic from their surroundings for years.

Vertex became a very popular bird in Hogwarts. Especially the girls in Harry's year became very found of him. Vertex had enjoyed the attention at first and his thirst of meeting new people had been unlimited. In the beginning of the term, when he still enjoyed attention, he had showed off every morning as a post owl. Even though he

rarely had any messages to deliver he liked to hold out his leg and pretend. Then it seemed to have gotten too much and Vertex had settled down in Gryffindor common room.

One memorable incident had been when Vertex somehow managed to get a snitch out from Madam Hooch's office, which he had chased, around Hogwarts, wrecking havoc. Seamus and Dean came up with the theory that Weasley's were good at Quidditch because of their hair colour since Vertex was mostly red and obviously was a natural seeker.

Even though Vertex liked Harry best of all the students nobody suspected that Vertex was partly his, everyone thought Fleur had forged him.

Neville agreed to help Harry and Fleur to grow herbs and Professor Sprout had donated a corner of Greenhouse two for them to use. With some growth and engorgement charms, they were soon self-providing. The conditions did not allow them to grow the fine type Hagrid ordered from Egypt but Vertex didn't complain even though he often visited Hagrid for his meals.

Ever since the second year's mandrakes became mature the Sixth Year's practised human transfiguration. It was lucky they had plenty of mandrakes because several students got so horribly miss transfigured that not even McGonagall had been able to return them to their original shape.

Fortunately Harry, Ron and Hermione managed to keep their switching spells clean enough not to send anyone to the hospital wing. Harry was secretly thankful for Neville not taking transfiguration he couldn't imagine what he could have done, or rather what he could accidentally have done.

The exams was not as demanding as the OWLs had been the previous year or maybe Harry was just better prepared for them this year. Defence against the dark arts was easy, they were each given a mirror with a curse that they would have to break the tricky part was that they were not allowed to shatter the glass.

Transfiguration and Charms were trickier. In Transfiguration, they had to transfigure a classmate to a cat and back. Points were given depending on how natural the cat had been and how fast the transfiguration had been made. The charms exam was divided into one practical part and one theoretical. It was pretty straightforward the more spells you could perform and knew the better.

The care of Magical creature's exam was hard. Madam Maxime lent Hagrid a few of her giant horses again and they had to prove that they knew how to take care of them.

All of the exams together was nothing compared to the Potion exam it was a complete and utter nightmare. Snape had them brewing memory concoctions and they were not only difficult to brew but the smoke was poisonous and would force anyone who happened to inhale it, relive a random memory.

There were lid charms to use to make sure that no smoke escaped but it was very hard to maintain a good lid since the magic in the potion kept dissolving it. Whenever somebody's lid let a little cloud of smoke escape the brewer would freeze and relive a memory. Mandy Brocklehurst, a Ravenclaw, was forced to relive a horrible memory and she burst out into tears but managed to pull herself together before Snape could throw her out.

Harry was petrified if he had to relive a memory and it was one of his not so pleasant memories there was no way he could be able to finish his potion and if he couldn't finish this potion he would fail his exam. Perhaps the fear of the lid leaking made him pay extra close attention and finish the potion with out any leaks at all one of the few who did. Crabbe and Goyle didn't manage to keep the lid charms at all but that didn't matter since they had not been able to brew the potion right in the first place and did not create any poisonous smoke.

All in all Harry was happy with how the exams had gone, he had never studied this much in advance and now that it was all over he was happy he had. Most of the students who were done with their exams were laying flat on the ground in a shadow of a tree near the lake. Hermione had been quiet ever since they left the castle and Harry couldn't figure out why.



"All right just let it out Hermione," Ron said, he obviously knew what was up with her.

"Are you sure?" Hermione asked.

"Positive, it's worse when you are not talking at all," Ron said Harry was now utterly bewildered he had no idea of what was going on.

"All right," Hermione said, "How did it go? Do you think you got good grades? I think I did best in charms, that is of the subject you are taking... otherwise I think Arithmancy I am not too sure about Hagrid's test but I suppose I am not just a horse person and Hagrid knows that hopefully he will go on my essays... So how did you do?"

"Fine I suppose," Harry said, "But potions were scary"

"Tell me about it," Ron agreed.

"You weren't there. Remember?" Harry asked.

"No but do you honestly think that Hermione's boyfriend won't pass a potions exam?" Ron asked.

"I'm sorry mate I had no idea... do you want to talk about it?" Harry asked tragically.

"N-no it's okay I am fine," Ron said and pretended to burst out in noisy tears.

"Honestly," Hermione said but couldn't help smiling.

"Oh it's all so awful!" Ron sobbed noisily.

"Will you keep it down, people are starting to stare at us and we are prefects!" Hermione hissed.

Ron sobbed even louder at these words and rolled around on the ground, thoroughly annoying Hermione.

"Behave yourself," Hermione hissed.

“How can you be so heartless?” Ron wailed. Harry had to admit it Ron did have a certain gift for dealing with all the built up tension from the exams.

“If you don’t start acting your age I am leaving,” Hermione said firmly.

“There is only one thing that ever can make me happy again,” Ron said stopping his huge fake sobs for a moment.

“I’ll just go visit Hagrid,” Harry said quickly and left he didn’t want to know what possible Ron wanted even though he already did.

“And what may that be?” He heard Hermione’s voice reply before he ran out of earshot.

“Where’s the fire?” Hagrid asked when Harry came running across the lawn. Hagrid was sitting on a bench next to his hut sculpting something with a knife.

Harry turned around and pointed towards Ron and Hermione they were silhouetted against the glittering water far away. Ron and Hermione were kissing passionately, he was leaning down over her and she had tilted her head upwards, their arms were wrapped around each other.

Hagrid chuckled and continued carving with his knife, “They’ll get married in five years.”

Harry didn’t reply even though it was likely Ron and Hermione would get married as soon as they left Hogwarts. It saddened him somewhat that probably as soon as they left Hogwarts it would be Ron and Hermione; he feared they would drift away from him. Hopefully when that day came he would have somebody to take his mind of it.

“Exams where all right?” Hagrid asked.

“Hope so,” Harry replied, “What are you making?”

Hagrid held out a little whistle that appeared to be made by some kind of bone, “What do you think?”

"Nice," Harry said.

"It's a gift for Selena thought she might like it so she remembers Hogwarts over the summer," Hagrid explained.

"She'll love it," Harry said and marvelled at how natural loving Hagrid actually was especially as he was half-giant and didn't have the genetic odds on his side.

Then he supposed that Hagrid's father must have been the same. After all, it takes a whole lot of love for anyone to fall for a giantess, even if it happened to be a relatively small giantess.

"You have grown a lot this last year... Ron and Hermione too," Hagrid said with a glance towards the kissing couple.

Harry didn't reply but Hagrid didn't seem to expect an answer.

"Guardian, that something eh?" Hagrid said.

"Definitely," Harry agreed, "We finally worked out where she is staying by the way. We figured Grimmauld place was not a good place for a twelve year old so she will be staying with Tonks and her mother Andromeda."

"Andromeda is a good choice, got the same background as Selena," Hagrid commented.

"So what are you doing this summer Hagrid?" Harry asked.

"Oh I got to return the Albraxans to Olympe then I expect Dumbledore to have work for me hasn't told me anything yet," Hagrid said and continued carving on the whistle.

"Any news from the giants?" Harry asked after a moment.

"Not much they still don't like us much but can't seem to organize themselves enough to join the death eaters so they are pretty neutral at the moment," Hagrid said as he held up the whistle in the air and inspected it carefully.

“Hand me the umbrella will you?” Hagrid asked gesturing towards his pink umbrella that was leaning towards his hut.

“I suppose you won’t mind turning your back for a moment, do you?” Hagrid asked when Harry handed it too him.

“Hmm let’s see now,” Hagrid muttered behind him, “Argentum Mutare... that’s it... Prohibere Scabere... that would do it... all right you can turn back now.”

The once bony grey whistle was now shining silver and Hagrid held it proudly in the sunlight, “Figured silver would be nice.”

“But Hagrid what about the ministry won’t they know you have done magic?” Harry asked.

“Oh no they are far to busy with death eaters and all I recon besides they already snapped my wand and expelled me not much more they can do is there?” Hagrid said smugly and inserted a leather string through a hoop in the whistle.

“Hey wait a minute isn’t that anti scratch charm OWL level?” Harry asked.

“Well I practised a bit on my own,” Hagrid said proudly, “And Dumbledore or McGonagall always helps if there’s... I wasn’t supposed to tell you that.”

“Don’t worry Hagrid I won’t tell anyone,” Harry promised.

“Think Vertex got time for a delivery?” Hagrid asked picking out a quill and some parchment from one of his pockets of his coat that was hanging beside him. Harry focused on his Phoenix how he looked and acted and tried to picture the bird in his minds eye.

A few minutes later Vertex came soaring down form the Owlery, his newly grown plumage made him glorious when sighted. Majestic, distinct red feathers had replaced the fluffy feathers; his golden tail feathers had grown and Vertex was capable of carrying Harry without any troubles at all now.

"Hello Vertex," Hagrid called, "There are some herbs for you on the table inside."

Vertex gave a whistle and soared straight into Hagrid's hut through the open door a few seconds later Vertex joined them outside with a green herb in his beak.

"Up for a delivery?" Hagrid asked, "Got a little gift for Selena."

Vertex loved having an important task so he straitened up with all the dignity he had learned from the owl in the owlery and held out his leg for Hagrid.

"That's a good boy," Hagrid said as he attached the whistle and note he had just written. Before Vertex disappeared in a flash he flew up to Harry's shoulder and kissed him.

Hagrid chuckled.

Harry didn't see Hagrid again until the end of term feast a few days later. The great hall was decorated in Red and Golden colours, Gryffindor had won the house cup for the sixth year running.

"As an old broken record I have a few words to say this year as well before we dig in to our wonderful feast. This year has been hard for all of us in one way or another some of us has lost relatives or friends..."

At this point Fleur gave up watching over the sea of students and fixed her gaze on her hands

"...I want all of you to know that Hogwarts is open all summer, day as night to those of you in need no matter who you are. Now, onto more cheerful matters. Before I announce the house points this year I have the great pleasure of awarding Mr Harry Potter with a special award for extra services to the school as a thank you for teaching the Gryffindors how to duel. I would also like to apologize to all future detention takers who has to polish yet another trophy in the trophy room," Dumbledore said.

“Not fair!” Tonks exclaimed and the entire great hall burst out laughing.

When the laughter had subsided and Dumbledore had stopped chuckling, he continued his speech, “Now to the house points on fourth place Ravenclaw with 382 points”

There was week applause from the Ravenclaw table and some supportive applause from the Gryffindor and the Hufflepuff table. Ravenclaw had not been in fourth place in decades they didn’t function as usual with the war going on.

“Third place Slytherin with 423 points”

There were some scattered applause from the Slytherin table and some of the staff table joined in; Snape did not however.

“This year Hufflepuff have done better then in many, many years. 468 points, Congratulations to second place Hufflepuff,” Dumbledore said and loud cheers erupted from the Hufflepuff table they were obviously very pleased with their result.

“And finally Gryffindor with 481 points wins the house cup for the sixth year in a row,” Now it was Gryffindors turn to cheer and they were joined good-heartedly by Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw.

“Now before I accidentally repeat my self... Dig in!”

The tables filled with food almost as quickly as Ron started to pile it on his plate.

It was sad as usual to leave Hogwarts the following day. Harry was in a gloomy mood all the way down to the Hogsmeade train station. Sad thoughts such as, “Next time I make this trip I won’t be coming back,” whirled through his head.

“Come on Harry,” Fleur said grabbing his hand. The carriage had stopped and Harry was the only one who had not even risen from his seat. Reluctantly Harry let himself be pulled out of the carriage and on to the platform.

“Look there’s Malfoy,” Ron said glancing over the platform. Draco Malfoy was entertaining a large group Slytherins at the front of the train. For once Harry couldn’t tell at a distance of who he was making fun of.

“Let’s sit in the back of the train so we won’t bump in to him by accident,” Harry said because Ron looked like he wanted to bump into Malfoy badly one last time before the holyday.

They got the very last compartment of the train. Selena said an early goodbye to her first year friends in case they wouldn’t see each other at the platform and joined Harry, Ron, Hermione, Fleur and Tonks in the last compartment. Selena and Tonks sat opposite each other near the window. Ron and Hermione took the occasion of a long train ride to huddle close together. Harry and Fleur sat next to each other without touching.

“Just never fly a broom indoors she will go absolutely mad, honestly you would think it was the end of the world just because that vase got in the way,” Tonks warned Selena about her mother, “I mean it’s not like it was hard to repair. But I was underage then so the ministry sent owls of course, that may be why she was so mad. Anyway just don’t fly indoors when she is home at least.”

“Right,” Selena giggled, “No flying indoors when your mother is home.”

“And no magic out of school unless it’s a matter of life and death,” Harry added.

“Right,” Selena said.

“That’s right all magic you is allowed is potions, but that’s fun as well we could sip some Veritaserum into Mr Egdeclose’s tea he’s our muggle neighbour he’s a pain in the...”

“But that’s illegal!” Hermione exclaimed, “It’s illegal to even brew Veritaserum with out special permission from the ministry.”

“Well, he wouldn’t know would he?” Tonks replied innocently, “Besides I never get any real edge to it so he’ll just mutter about how nasty he was to his kids forty years ago.”

“You’ve done it before?” Hermione asked incredulously.

“Of course I have, you don’t expect me to just do nothing for an entire summer do you?” Tonks asked.

“But you could have poisoned him,” Fleur said.

“No I couldn’t. Not badly anyway he wouldn’t have notice if I did mind you. Half his tea is whiskey,” Tonks said, “Besides you should talk about your problems or they will never go away.”

“Fine but don’t come to me when he’s dead and the ministry is banging on your door,” Hermione replied.

“We won’t,” Selena promised happily.

“Harry, are you going to stand for this? You are her legal Guardian!” Hermione said turning to him.

“Well,” Harry said thinking quickly, “If you just mutter about things it’s not really Veritaserum the definitions are very clear.”

“If she added enough moonpowder and daffodil blades it would be Veritaserum,” Hermione retorted.

“How do you know that?” Ron burst out.

“I read,” Hermione said loudly, “The lack of moonpowder and daffodil blades are one of the most common reasons Veritaserum loses its potential!”

“So I should just add more of those?” Tonks asked.

“Yes!” Hermione said, “Good luck! And have fun! Come on Ron it’s time for a patrol!”

“Why did she have to be so angry for?” Tonks asked sadly, when Ron and Hermione had left the compartment.



"She doesn't want her friends to get in trouble" Harry said.

"But I won't cause her any trouble I will take the blame if anyone finds out" Tonks said.

"That's not the way Hermione works," Harry said proudly, "She'll worry about you and if anything would happen she would be the first to defend you... that is unless she thinks you deserve your punishment."

"It's okay," Selena said, "We don't have to make real Veritaserum we could settle for the mumbling serum that way we won't get into trouble even if someone finds out and Hermione won't have to worry."

"All right," Tonks said regaining her happy mood, "So what will you do while we make potions, Fleur?"

"No idea the only thing I know is that I am to follow Harry all the way to his aunt and uncle's home," Fleur said.

"You are coming along in the car?" Harry said and couldn't hide a snicker, "How are you going to do that?"

"I won't give them any choice," Fleur said and flared her veela charm.

"How do you do that?" Selena burst out.

"Oh, well it comes with that bird shape you saw a couple of weeks ago. It's veela stuff," Fleur explained awkwardly.

"I know," Selena said, "I just thought you used it all the time I mean you are always beautiful."

"Thanks," Fleur said.

"I suppose you have to be part veela to learn?" Selena asked sadly.

"Yes," Fleur replied, "But you can learn some of it, but you'll have to be a little older and it's strictly girls business."

"Aw come on I want to know," Harry pleaded playfully.

"All right," Fleur said grinning wickedly and stood up. "First you have to really know you are a female and that you have a female figure."

She pushed her chest out as much as she could without it being obvious, "Once you know that you are pouting your breasts your hips will start swing naturally. It's very important to be confident of your femininity or it will look forced and then it's much more attractive to just be yourself instead. Hermione master this to perfection, if you have noticed. She doesn't show her physical femininity but no one would ever take her for a boy anyway because she really knows she is a girl and proud of it. She could use some confidence in her body but I'm sure Ron will give her that soon eno..."

"Right. That's enough," Harry interrupted irritably, "Couldn't you just have said use lipstick or something?"

"Lipstick has nothing to do with it," Fleur said, "It's the way you move your body and the way you talk."

"I would have settled with the lipstick explanation," Harry said.

"Oh poor Potter is prude," Tonks teased.

"I'm not I just don't want to think of Hermione that way," Harry said, "She wouldn't like it."

"It's no big deal," Fleur said apologetically, "She won't mind us talking about her and Ron everyone does anyway."

"Well I do she's Hermione," Harry said.

"Just so that you are aware of it Harry," Fleur said softly settling down next to him again, "You are just as bad as Ron is around Ginny and you have to face it Hermione is not a little girl anymore. She'll want to do stuff and she'll need to talk to you about it she doesn't have many really close girlfriends."

"Hey," Tonks said, "I'm her friend."

"Yes of course but it's not sure you will be available," Fleur replied.

"You won't teach next year?" Harry said at the same time Selena said, "You won't come back?"

"Err," Tonks said while she gathered her thoughts, "The aurors really need me and my gift..."

"But why?" Selena asked, "You love Hogwarts!"

"Yeah but it's really not necessary with two defence against the dark arts teachers," Tonks said.

"So you are staying?" Harry asked Fleur.

"Yes it seems so," She replied, "Unless the job really is cursed."

"No, that makes sense," Harry said, "You are a curse breaker."

"I never thought of it that way," Fleur said.

"But can't you stay just one more year?" Selena pleaded with Tonks.

"No I am afraid not but maybe I can continue teaching the dueling club or something so I won't have to be gone all the time. Besides if I am going to have Harry as my disciple I can't just barge in there at the same time as he does and say that I want to tutor the-boy-who-lived."

"If you rather want to teach at Hogwarts it won't be a big deal..."

"Shut up Harry you know as well as I do that this is the right thing to do," Tonks said.

"I don't mean to pry or anything but are you all right being an auror you didn't seem to happy about it at Christmas," Harry asked carefully.

"No It's all right I was just worn down," Tonks said reassuringly, "Unlike Gryffindors Hufflepuffs are faithful and loyal to their cause and doesn't give up even if it means loads of work."

"Hey!" Selena said indignantly.

"It's true," Tonks said, "Ever heard of a Hufflepuff that gave up?"

"But that's only because your all to stupid to know any better," Selena teased.

"I suppose Gryffindors are so much better," Tonks teased back, "I heard a story once about a boy who entered this chamber with a basilisk with out even telling his head of house."

"I brought Lockhart," Harry defended himself.

"I though you said before you knew he was a fool from the beginning?" Tonks retorted.

"Yeah," Fleur chipped in, "And he also told Harry that he didn't do anything in his book even before they entered the chamber in fact Lockhart didn't even have his wand."

"He was going to Oblivate us," Harry said.

"So why did you bring someone like that along? Wouldn't it have been better to ask Minerva for help?" Fleur asked.

"We... th... We didn't have much time!" Harry exclaimed, "We just did it we didn't think."

"Exactly!" Tonks said grinning victoriously, "Now who is stupid!"

"I pulled it off didn't I?" Harry said.

"That doesn't mean it wasn't stupid," Selena said.

"Fine gang up on me," Harry said.

"Oh come on admit it, it was stupid," Fleur said.

"All right it was stupid but it worked," Harry said, "And if I had waited another moment Ginny could have died."

All three girls beamed at him for admitting he had been stupid.

"There are way too many girls in here," Harry said, "First that Hermione discussion and now this."

"Don't you like us, Wingbeat?" Fleur asked teasingly.

"Well yes, but that doesn't change the fact that you are all girls."

"Would you rather want us to be boys?" Selena asked.

"No," Harry replied, "But can't we discuss Quidditch or something sensible for a change?"

"All right," Fleur nodded.

"It was a really great match against Slytherin," Tonks said.

"Yes that final dive was really fast." Fleur agreed.

"And Malfoy's crash," Selena added.

"Oh and Ron's hair and face," Tonks said enthusiastically, "I didn't think he had that in him."

"He didn't Hermione poisoned him," Selena said eagerly, "He was going on and on about the weather and every thing and he ordered Hermione down into the kitchens to make sure the food was all right and she agreed and then she put something in Ron's food."

"Ha!" Tonks exclaimed, "She got him around her little finger."

"As if she doesn't melt when he kisses her," Fleur said, "You can tell she goes all wobbly."

"Oh I saw them in the common room the other night they woke me up because they were arguing badly but then they just started kissing like mad," Selena said.

"It's what they do they argue and they kiss," Tonks stated.

Harry groaned inwardly he had not been able to say a word about Quidditch before the topic had changed to Ron and Hermione. He excused himself and went to find the food trolley. He needed some peace and a cold bottle of pumpkin juice. Ten minutes later after a chat with Luna, Neville and Colin, he arrived back to the compartment to find that the subject had not changed much.

"I don't know," Selena said hesitantly, "Oh your back Harry! Did you get me anything?"

"Sure help yourself," Harry said and put a heavy bag full of pumpkin juice and sweets on the little compartment table.

"You're not getting off that easily missy," Tonks said as Harry settled back in his seat.

"Promise not to laugh," Selena said.

"I promise," Tonks said at once.

"Denis," Selena said blushing as red as ever.

"Denis Creevy?" Tonks asked at once.

"Yeah but he's a third year," Selena said sadly.

"Don't worry a bout that Harry's three years younger then I, and we never even noticed," Fleur said comfortingly.

"So what's so special about him?" Tonks asked eagerly.

"I don't know," Selena said but she did know because she continued, "He's handsome... well cute at least, he got good grades and he's witty and he stands up for who he is."

"That is so great!" Tonks said, "I wish I would teach next year because then I could have put you in detention together, something stupid like..."

"I know," Fleur said mischievously, "You could be forced to fill out Astronomy charts some night in the astronomy tower."

"You can give that as a detention?" Tonks asked.

"Of course you can if I say I need an astronomy chart filled out for my personal divination project," Fleur said, "You should be able to get a kiss out of that."

Selena blushed brick red again, "Um... you think he might like me back?"

"Why wouldn't he?" Asked Fleur.

"Well I don't know... I'm not the only girl who thinks he is cute you know," Selena said blushing madly, "Especially since he started that study circle."

"Don't worry about that," Tonks said reassuringly, "We'll think of something so he'll notice you more than the rest."

"Since he is so young you might have to take the first step," Fleur said seriously, "Boys tend to be a little thick at that age."

"You are the thickest most stubborn immature..." Hermione's shrieked outside the door.

"Oh come on Hermione you know how Malfoy gets to me," Ron said defensively.

"If you hadn't done that we could have reported him but no! You just had to spoil it all!" Hermione went on.

"All right it was wrong it was my fault. I am sorry," Ron said earnestly.

Hermione's voice couldn't be heard through the door and Harry supposed they were using their mouths and tongues for other things than talking. A minute later Ron and Hermione entered the compartment.

"So where have you been?" Tonks asked innocently, "That was a rather long patrol."

"Thank god you are here," Harry said at once so that Ron and Hermione wouldn't have to answer, "They are killing me!"

"We're not," Tonks denied.

"Oh yes you are," Harry retorted, "Girl talk is lethal and should be considered unforgivable as it is like a slow death by cruciatus."

"Hey we talked about Quidditch too," Tonks said.

"Girls can't talk about Quidditch," Ron said taking Harry's side.

"Girls can talk about Quidditch just as well as boys can!" Tonks exclaimed.

"Really I thought your comments were about the hair and face of one of the players rather than the game," Harry said.

"Well that's another thing isn't it," Fleur said defensively, "We just found a better subject."

"But we were suppo... argh I give up!" Harry said exasperated, "Up for a game of snapp, Ron?"

With Ron the girl talk was bearable and the worse part of it, the part about Ron and Hermione was not discussed since they were there. All in all, the trip progressed nicely. As they approached London settlements passed by their window more and more often. The English country side really was quite beautiful Harry thought as they slowly passed a field lined with old trees and a few hundreds meters away stood an old barn.

**oooooooooooooooooooo**

Only two chapters left...



## Chapter 36 Battle

"Think the engine finally got old and broke down or are we slowing down because of dementors again?" Ron asked abruptly and Harry realised that they were indeed going much slower than they usually did.

"I really hope it isn't dementors," Harry said jokingly.

"I don't like this," Tonks said and started looking out through the window hoping to see anything. Harry couldn't see any direct danger because they were going a bit slower than usual but Tonks apparently did.

"Listen," Hermione said and they all froze, "Can you hear?"

"Not much..." Ron said shaking his head carelessly.

"That's exactly it. They've turned off the engine," Hermione said and Harry found that she was right he couldn't even hear the faintest thing except sounds from inside their compartment.

"Something like this was not something we planned for." Tonks said anxiously, "Fleur go up front and check with the driver. Harry, summon Vertex at once we need to send a message to Dumbledore. Hermione write the message tell him what's going on. Ron you go with her and see if any one else knows anything on the way."

Harry had never heard Tonks use this kind of authority before but apparently, she had it in her if she needed it. Ron and Fleur left the compartment at once and Hermione started scribbling a note.

Almost as soon as Fleur and Ron had left the compartment they came back both very pale.

"Yes?" Tonks demanded.

"We are not attached to the rest of the train," Fleur said faintly, fear etched in her face, "We must have been disconnected a while back because we can't even see the rest of the train."

"We are also alone on this wagon, it can not have been an accident" Ron said grimly, "Bet Malfoy thought it funn..."

"Get Vertex here NOW!" Tonks yelled, "Ron I want you at this end of the wagon, Fleur you go to the other end yell if you see anything at all."

Ron and Fleur left at once without questions and a second later Vertex arrived with a blinding flash. As if sensing their fear Vertex started singing, it helped a little.

"Harry your foe glass!" said Tonks urgently.

"Accio Trunk," Harry cried at the same time as he drew his wand. It only took a few seconds for his trunk to fly down from the luggage racks a few compartments away and into their compartment.

"The protective wards of the train won't hold if they are stretched out like this," Tonks muttered.

Harry opened his trunk and pulled out his foe glass. He went numb, what he always feared he would see in his foe glass was there in plain view. Lord Voldemort stood in the middle of the mirror leering at him. Even the reflection of Voldemort appear to want to hurt him.

Behind Voldemort at each side stood two other figures, they were a bit blurry but Harry could still identify them as Bellatrix Lestrange and Lucius Malfoy. At their feet slithered Voldemort's snake, Nagini.

"Well?" Tonks inquired sternly.

Harry didn't find words so he just turned the mirror around for them to see. They gasped and Selena looked as if she might faint.

"Voldemort," Stated Hermione slowly as if hardly believing her eyes.

Tonks cursed badly enough to snap them all out of their numb disbelief.

“Write that down now!” Tonks told Hermione and she started to scribble frantically. “Harry, get your Christmas and invisibility cloak on.”

Harry pulled his Graphorn hide cloak on but didn’t put his Invisibility cloak on.

“Selena you take this no matter what happens just stay hidden until help comes,” Harry said and handed his father’s old cloak to her.

“But what about you?” Selena asked bravely.

“Voldemort will find me, cloak or no cloak, you are unimportant to him...”

“Get the bloody cloak on now!” Tonks yelled at Selena and so she did. Hermione handed Harry the note she had just written to Dumbledore for him to send with Vertex.

“Take this to Dumbledore. If you can’t find him make Fawkes get Dumbledore if you can’t find either, go to Grimmauld place,” Harry instructed quickly. Vertex disappeared in a flash.

Tonks opened her mouth to say something but was interrupted by a low thunder.

“The train wards,” Hermione said breathlessly, “They are gone!”

“Damn,” Tonks said coolly she had been expecting that, “Hope Dumbledore...”

There was a sudden click in Harry’s ears as if he had just performed a very steep dive on his broom.

“Was that apparition wards?” Hermione asked hoarsely.

“We won’t be able to get help unless they can apparate here,” said Tonks briskly, “Hermione you and Fleur will have to break them, you are good at Arith...”

“Avada Kedavra!” A faint female yell could be heard followed by an ear-splitting shriek from Fleur and a huge crash.

Without thinking, Harry ran out of the compartment towards Fleur’s end of the train. He only barley noticed a very pale Ron standing in the corridor at their end of the train.

“Death eaters,” Ron said hoarsely. True enough Harry saw through the windows while he ran towards Fleur, all around them death eaters appeared, encircling the lone wagon. They seemed to arrive with Portkeys because they were holding odd objects.

“Fleur!” Harry yelled as he approached her side.

“Thanks for the bracelet Wingbeat,” He heard Fleur say from inside the last compartment at this side of the wagon.

“Fleur,” He repeated, relief flooding his body.

He threw the door open and saw to his horror that she must have flown from the end of the wagon through the first compartment wall.

There was a huge hole in the wall; wood and debris littered the compartment. In the middle of the room, Fleur lay under parts of the bench that had once covered the lower part of the wrecked wall. He knew that you did not survive flying through a wall like that.

“Fleur,” He repeated again this time in a disbelieving whisper.

“It’s okay I’m not in pain just a little numb,” Fleur said courageously.

Harry frantically pulled Fleur loose from underneath the debris and saw to his great surprise that there was no blood. Fleur seemed to realise this as well because she stared down her body in surprise and perhaps by pure surprise she stood up. Harry couldn’t believe his eyes; he just stared at her hardly even noticing Tonks rushing past the compartment in the corridor.

“Are you okay?” He asked.

“Yes,” Fleur said uncertainly, “Even my wand is all right.”

They heard another string of curses from Tonks, "Voldemort is there!"

Harry was brought back to reality from the miraculously well being of Fleur and bolted from the compartment towards Tonks. Tonks was peering out towards Voldemort through the door opening at the end of the train.

"Get back!" She hissed at him fixed him with her gaze so quickly that she must have been using an agility charm.

At once almost with out thinking, Harry performed an agility charm and immediately felt much calmer, now he knew at least that he would be able to dodge most curses with out trouble.

"Fleur," Tonks said visibly relived, "If you are well enough, I need you to break the apparition wards, Hermione is already working on them in the compartment."

"But what about you two..."

"It's an order!" Tonks spat and Fleur left them at a sprint.

"Got any ideas?" Tonks asked Harry.

"We just have to hold them off until we get help," He replied though he had no idea of how they were supposed to do that.

Harry sneaked a quick glance out the door opening. He saw what he least thing he wanted to see in the entire world. Voldemort was standing in the middle of the railway track as tall and pale as ever. He was stroking his jaw with one skeletal hand in a thoughtful expression. As soon as Harry had identified Voldemort, Voldemort's cat like blood red eyes focused on him. Pain that Harry had not felt in month soared through his head and he braced himself against it.

"Playing hide and seek again Potter?" Voldemort taunted.

Harry expected the pain to increase even more at the sound of Voldemort's voice but it didn't. Instead, he realised that the pain was not as bad as it usually was it was almost bearable.

"If you are brave Harry, face me and I won't have to send someone in after you," Voldemort said just loud enough for Harry to hear him. "You wouldn't want to put the remaining of your friends in danger, would you?"

Harry smiled grimly; Voldemort obviously thought Fleur had been killed.

"Bellatrix here got a little eager," Voldemort continued, "Now eagerness is good but we have to learn how to control our eagerness, must we not Bellatrix?"

"Yes master," Bellatrix replied in a sugar-sweet insane voice.

She had just murdered somebody or at least that was what she thought and she seemed as happy about that as Hermione did when she got a new interesting book. Harry knew he shouldn't be surprised by this but he was. He didn't even know if he could blame Bellatrix for Sirius death or Neville's parents, she was so utterly insane that she couldn't be held responsible for her actions.

"This is your last chance Potter, stop hiding and face me," Voldemort said, enjoying his advantage immensely.

"Stay down, Harry!" Tonks commanded.

Harry didn't listen he knew he had to buy them time so that Fleur and Hermione could brake the apparition wards and for Dumbledore to arrive with the order of the phoenix. Harry hoped that Voldemort would enjoy making fun of him for a long time before he decided to curse him.

"If anything happens I will jump out of the way," Harry told Tonks reassuringly and with a resolute step placed himself in the door opening facing Voldemort.

Harry was extremely thankful that he was standing in the train was able to look down on Voldemort. He held his wand painfully hard pointing strait down prepared to use it in a tenth of a second.

“Bravery is a virtue,” Voldemort told him triumphantly, “At least that is what they say on a fool’s funeral.”

Now that Harry had a better view of the death eaters and Voldemort. He saw that Malfoy and Lestrage stood on either side of their lord. As in the foe glass, Nagini was slithering around their feet.

“Fools are the ones that die because stupidity,” Harry said deciding to play along, “And those who die of stupidity appears to be geniuses compared to dark lords who can’t kill one years olds.”

“CRUCIO!” Bellatrix yelled but as Harry had boosted his reflexes, he didn’t have much trouble dodging the curse.

“Are you mad? Stall not aggravate,” Tonks hissed as the cruciatus curse passed between them and flew through the hole in the wall of the first compartment.

“If I want to curse Potter I will do so. I don’t want another mindless attempt Bella,” Voldemort’s voice said steadily and Harry decided it was safe enough to step back into the door opening.

“I am sorry my lord, I await your punishment later,” Bellatrix said obediently.

“Now where were we...?” Voldemort said thoughtfully, “Oh yes you had just insulted me for which you will pay.”

“Is there anyway out of this?” Harry asked taking Tonks advice and tried to earn time.

“There are always ways out,” Voldemort said smiling grotesquely, “You however Mr Potter has only one way out this. Your friends the Metamorphmagus Nymphadora Tonks might be given an additional way and the same goes for the mudblood who managed to equal my grades.”

“Even Voldemort knows my mother named me Nymphadora,” Tonks muttered angrily.

“If they join your cause,” Harry stated.

“Obviously,” Lord Voldemort replied, “Any last request Mr Potter, we could hold of the unforgivables if you ask nicely.”

“This is it,” Harry mumbled to Tonks.

He could somehow feel through his scar that Voldemort was ready to kill him. Harry was not going to let him do that, at least not without a good fight first, especially as he was defending his friends and family. He made up his mind. The horrible feeling of performing the killing curse was worth it if he could protect his friends just for a second longer.

It was the only way to keep the death eaters away. They would think twice before approaching the wagon if they knew there was a risk of being killed and not just stunned or disarmed as was expected by the-boy-who-lived. With all mind strength he could muster and with the confidence that he had managed to perform the killing curse before he raised his wand.

“Are you going to curse me?” Voldemort asked and some of the death eaters guffawed stupidly. Bellatrix or Lucius, however, did not.

Harry afforded a small smirk to cross his lips. He took a deep breath and steeled himself, “AVADA KEDAVRA!”

Harry experienced the horrible mental pain of performing the killing curse once more though it didn’t seem as bad as last time. He managed to stand still without swaying much. The green light of death rushed towards Voldemort and he actually looked genuinely surprised for a moment before he stepped out of the way carelessly.

Nagini who was slithering behind Voldemort at the moment had not seen where Harry had been aiming and let out a hiss in surprise when she saw the killing curse speed towards her.

Harry had never thought that he ever would feel happy about killing anything at least not while he was in his right mind. Nagini was an exception, when her head fell lifelessly to the ground Harry felt pure delight. One nightmare was off his back.



“AAAARRRGHHHH!” Voldemort yelled in anger when he realised what had happened.

Before Harry had time to think, Voldemort waved his wand at the wagon.

“Run!” Tonks hissed and pulled Harry’s forcefully away from the door opening.

Harry came back to his senses and started running away from the door opening, after Tonks through the corridor towards Ron’s side of the train. Half way through the train Voldemort’s curse hit the wagon.

It was an explosion, Harry felt like Grawp had hit him with a club in his back. He lost foothold and was pushed into Tonks who was running in front of him. Together they sailed through the corridor waving their arms and legs desperately.

He briefly noticed that they were going to crash with Ron who had fallen down on the floor at the end of the corridor. But they didn’t crash; instead it felt like they hit a giant invisible pillow right in front of Ron.

Once they had bounced off whatever they just hit, they crashed down on the floor tangled together. Harry noticed now that he had floor under him that the entire wagon was leaning heavily towards Voldemort’s end. He untangled himself quickly and spun around ready to send another curse at Voldemort.

Half the wagon was gone. It ended just in the middle where the luggage racks were. The wagon leaned so heavily that all they could see through the open end was some of the railway track. Harry realised there must be several safety charms on the wagon or it would have been blown off the track.

“Bloody hell!” Ron exclaimed, “Are you all right?”

The door to the compartment Harry was sitting next to burst open knocking him over to the other side of the corridor.

“Harry! Are you all right what...” Hermione stopped abruptly as she saw that half the wagon was missing, “Goodness!”

“Get back in there and work with those wards,” Tonks said wincing slightly as sat up.

She was bleeding from numerous cuts all over her body probably from flying splinters and glass. Harry had his cloak to thank for his relative wellbeing. He looked down towards the opening a few compartments down and saw to his horror that death eaters were approaching their wands raised.

Thanks to the fact that the wagon was leaning the ceiling obscured the death eater’s upper half of the body so all they could see was billowing black robes and their lower arms, hands and wands. The death eaters clearly didn’t expect anyone to be alive or make resistance. Otherwise, they would not overlook the fact that someone would be able to see them from up the corridor.

“We have to aim to kill, nothing else will hold them off,” Tonks whispered urgently, “Ron do you know how to perform the killing curse?”

“N-no,” Ron stammered.

“It’s all right, there only seem to be two of them but if more comes go with the wand cracking curse they wont dare attack without a wand and make sure that they don’t sneak up from us from behind,” Tonks told Ron quickly.

Tonks took a resolute breath and turned to Harry, “You take the left one I take the right.”

The two death eaters were approaching slowly while removing debris, probably hoping to find Harry’s dead body.

“I’ve never killed a human before,” Harry said panicking slightly.

“Do you think I have?” Tonks snapped.

He glanced over at her and saw that her face was covered in tears and blood but her jaw was set in determination. Tonks would kill the death eater when he got close enough. Harry was terrified but he knew he would do it too. He had to. He steeled himself and focused on the feeling of death.

Tonks raised her wand and Harry did the same. Both he and Tonks were trembling like mad. He heard her take a deep breath and did the same. They both managed to stop trembling for a moment.

“AVADA KEDAVRA!” They chorused, a second later the two death eaters fell dead to the ground in the bright green light.

Harry felt sick and when the death eater he had killed fell to the ground and didn’t move, he threw up violently. When he had emptied his stomach, however, he noticed that he could still think normally.

Tonks was taking deep shaking breaths next to him. She had her eyes shut and was still trembling madly.

“Furocio,” Tonks muttered and waved her wand at herself not opening her eyes.

“It helps you should try it,” Tonks growled.

“What was that?” Harry asked faintly.

“Furious charms better then fear and desperation,” Tonks said angrily and opened her eyes to glare at him, “Only use it if you can control your anger.”

“Come out and we will kill you painlessly,” Someone called.

“Give us a moment while we making up our minds,” Ron yelled back.

“You got sixty seconds,” The same voice replied.

“It’s something,” Ron said.

“They won’t send anyone in to look after us like last time,” Tonks said in a forced calm tone “My best guess is that they will try another explosion.”

“We won’t survive another explosion like the last one,” Harry said trying to keep his calm.

“I bloody well realise that,” Tonks snapped, “We need a distraction to gain more time.”

“Maybe an explosion of our own...” Ron ventured.

“No Hermione get out here!” Tonks called and a few seconds later Hermione appeared in the door.

“We got thirty seconds to create a ward against an explosion,” Tonks explained, “We’ll do a simple protection ward, Expecto Protego, you join Ron and I’ll join Harry... no wait... that won’t work. You too feel too much for each other we won’t get a good balance. Fleur get out here now!”

Harry had a vague idea what Expecto Protego might be since he had done NEWTs practise papers. It worked a bit like the patronus charm but did what the Protego shield did, in larger scale and needed more than one spell caster.

“What’s going on,” Fleur asked as she appeared in the door opening.

“You join Harry Expecto Protego on three,” Tonks explained quickly, “One! Get ready!”

Fleur sat down next to Harry quickly and held his hand firmly. Harry felt himself relax slightly when the wonderful feeling of holding Fleur spread through his body.

“Two! Focus! Three!” Tonks said loudly.

“Expecto Protego!” Fleur, Harry, Ron and Hermione chorused and a silver light extracted from their wands engulfing the remaining part of the wagon.

“Get back to the wards,” Tonks said once the silver bubble was in place, “How is it going?”

“As good as can be expected if we are lucky we will break them in five minute,” Fleur replied as she and Hermione entered the compartment again. Harry got a brief look at parchments littering the floor full of hastily scribbled Arithmancy calculations.

“You’ve had your minute now get out or die,” The voice called threateningly, “And don’t think your little shield will save you!”

“Burn in hell!” Tonks yelled in reply.

“As you wish... Lucius join us for the chant?” the voice asked merrily.

“Of course Walden,” Lucius Malfoy’s amused voice replied.

“Get into the compartment,” Tonks said and pushed Harry and Ron inside it.

“They are going to perform a ritual aren’t they?” Hermione asked flatly, looking up from her parchment.

“Yes,” Tonks replied equally flatly.

“I want you all to know that I never wanted it any other way... just in case,” Hermione said smiling sadly.

“Me neither,” A little voice piped up from the apparent empty corner.

“There is still hope,” Fleur said frantically, “Get down on the floor everyone!”

Hermione continued smiling sadly but did as Fleur said. It was a very close squeeze especially as Harry’s trunk took a lot of space. Harry didn’t know what it meant that several peoples ganged up on them but he could clearly tell that Hermione didn’t expect to live through it. Harry was vaguely aware of Fleur grabbing his hand.

The death eaters surrounding the wagon all started chanting in a language Harry couldn’t make any sense of.

“This is when Dumbledore arrives,” Ron said bitterly.

“Shut up and help me put a dampening charm above us so we won’t bounce around,” Fleur snapped and started muttering rapid incantations. Harry could feel her rapid pulse through her hand harder than ever, it was almost painful in a way.

“There is a good probability that their explosion will knock out the apparition ward or at least weaken it enough to easily be broken,” Fleur added when she was done with the dampening charm.

“You do realise they will most likely create a crater fifty feet deep while doing so,” Hermione informed them softly.

“It’s a chance... they have stopped,” Fleur said and she was right the death eaters had stopped chanting.

Harry held Fleur’s hand painfully hard and so did she. Harry thought of his parents, Sirius and Hedwig maybe he would see them soon. If so was the case he would say hello to Luna’s mother on Luna’s behalf.

Images of all his friends started flickering in front of his eyes. He could see his fellow Gryffindors cheering for him to get the Snitch, he remember Nancy telling him he looked like his mother and that Hagrid had made a silver whistle for Selena. He remembered how Dumbledore eyes twinkle merrily behind his half moon spectacles and how he always felt safe when his old headmaster was around.

He thought of all the Weasleys, how Arthur loved anything that had something to do with muggles and how Molly loved anybody in need of love. Then he thought of Ginny and how cute she actually had been when she blushed all the time. Not that he returned those feelings but it had been cute anyway.

He turned his head and looked over at Fleur, she smiled at him and he smiled back.

Harry felt a horrible shock and then everything went black.

Didn't I promise an explosion after chapter 20? I hope you aren't too frustrated about the abrupt ending of this chapter... Next chapter:  
**"Phoenix song"**

Sorry if I made Hermione out of character in the end of this chapter but I figure she is a realist and brave enough to accept their odds. Next chapter will be up tomorrow... how sad it's only one chapter left... sigh...

## **Chapter 37 Phoenix song**

It was beautiful, divine, glorious and soft. Harry had heard Phoenix song many times before but never like this. He continued listening to the song for what felt as forever. He noticed that this could not possibly come from one phoenix alone. Slowly he realised that he didn't remember anything concrete and that he should be worried, but it was very hard worrying with all the wonderful phoenix song.

He slowly started to get a feeling that he should open his eyes but he didn't want to, he felt so at peace the way it was. The feeling that wanted him to open his eyes did not stop however and soon it had become so strong that he couldn't bear it any more. With huge effort, he managed to open his eyes slightly and saw a blue summer sky above him with some puffy white clouds in the distance.

Wherever he was, he wanted to stay, it was beautiful and the phoenix song was wonderful. The feeling that had forced him to open his eyes had been replaced by a feeling to move his body. It was a very strange feeling since he wasn't aware of having a body but he supposed that his eyes had to sit in a head and that the head had to be attached to a body, it wouldn't work otherwise.

Soon the feeling that he should move his body forced him to move his limbs. He contorted some muscles in his neck and then in his shoulders, he continued contorting muscles all through his body and found that it did he did in fact seem to have a body. He vaguely noticed pain in his left hand but it was not only pain it was something nice as well.

It was something he cared a lot for, he thought, but then figured that it was wrong it was not something it was someone. It was Fleur. Harry gasped in realisation as the memories flooded back to him and he sat bolt right up.

He saw all his closest friends lying around him on the compartment floor. He looked up again and wondered how he could possibly see the sky if he was inside the compartment. Half way up he saw that the top of what was left of the train wagon was missing.



Fleur opened her eyes and looked thoughtfully yet happily up at the sky.

"Fleur," Harry said hopefully.

Fleur focus on him with an empty confused expression but then she smiled, "Are we in heaven, Wingbeat?"

"No angel," Harry replied softly, "We are still in the compartment but the roof must have been blown off."

Fleur sat bold up right just as he had a few moments before, "What about the death eaters?"

Harry glanced out over the low wall that was still left and saw that the death eaters were still there but they seemed to have been knocked out by the explosion as well.

"Try to wake the others and I will see if the apparation wards are still up," Fleur said hurriedly and Harry turned over to Hermione who was lying down on his other side turned to Ron who was on her other side.

"Hermione," Harry said and checked for pulse but before he could feel it, he saw that she was breathing.

He shook her gently at first but when she didn't respond he tried more forcefully but still without success, she was clearly not well enough to wake up. He continued with Ron and found that he was in very much the same state as Hermione. Closest to where the window had been, under what had been the compartment table, laid Tonks curled around Selena in his invisibility cloak. Tonks and Selena were alive as well but wouldn't wake up.

"The wards are gone!" Fleur exclaimed, "Dumbledore will be able to get here any moment."

"KILL THEM!" Lord Voldemort's piercing voice screeched frantically, "KILL THEM!"

"We have to apparate," Fleur said as the first killing curse hit the low wall right next to them.

"Keep your head down!" Harry said and pulled Fleur closer to the floor as killing curses started flying over them and crashing into the remaining parts of the walls, "I won't leave them you go if you want to."

"We can apparate them with us, like Dumbledore does," Fleur said as the top part of the wall that had been under the window blew off with a crack. Harry briefly noticed several other killing curses flying their way and bend even lower down on the floor.

"We should have been dead, Hermione was right," Fleur said quickly, "I don't think even Dumbledore could have survived that explosion. Our ward took the worst of it and the rest my dampening charm must have taken care of the rest... it must have been us Harry we did it."

"What?" Harry asked.

"That's why it feels so good to hold hands it is magic," Fleur said as the top part of one of the benches blew away in a green flash, "Just like that book you summoned that broke the door, we were having body contact then as well... it makes us much stronger."

Harry didn't knew what to think, "Are you sure?"

"No," Fleur snapped, "But it's worth a try, if it is true we should be able to apparate."

"I have no idea of how to apparate," Harry said as another curse blew the last of the window wall away they now had nowhere to hide.

"It's simple we hold hands wave our wands and say disapparate while pretending that everyone is a part of our body, like Dumbledore said but remember to focus on yourself as well." Fleur said and caught his hand, "Then we focus on Diagon Alley it shouldn't be too far. I think we are close to London and when we start falling towards the ground we say apparate."

"But what if we splinch?" Harry asked frantically but just then, Fleur flew violently over to the other side of the compartment.

Green light hit the spot she had been half a second ago. Harry didn't let go of her hand and quickly pulled her down on the floor even though she was not much safer there.

"On three," Fleur said breathlessly she appeared to be in pain, "One."

"Two," Fleur said and took a deep breath. Harry squeezed her hand harder than ever.

He found it hard to pretend that Hermione, Ron, Tonks and Selena was apart of his body especially as he couldn't see all of them from where he was. He instead found it easier to pretend that the floor was a part of him as he was so close to it and that his friends were apart of the floor since they were laying on it.

"Three!"

"DISAPPARATE!" They yelled and everything went black again or white Harry couldn't tell.

"Diagon Alley, Diagon Alley, Diagon Alley," Harry kept chanting in his head but then he realised that he didn't focus on any specific part of Diagon Alley.

He figured that the name probably was not enough, as it was with floo powder. He probably needed to picture a part of Diagon Alley for it to work. With a quick decision, he started picturing the Leaky Cauldron in his minds eye. He tried to get every detail right and even how remarkable unnoticeable it was from the outside.

Just as he imagined how it looked from the outside, a muggle street came into view below him and he started falling down. There were cars on the street and loads of muggles on the sidewalks. They were not in Diagon Alley, but close. They were outside the leaky cauldron and falling. They were going to land in the middle of the street, and probably get hit by at least one car but there was not any choice. The street came closer and closer.

"APPARATE!" He yelled with all his might, he heard Fleur chorusing him and with a huge crack, they appeared.

Harry was lying down on his back and he wondered vaguely if he was on the asphalt of the street. A car horn sounded and there was a huge crash, Harry felt himself being thrown away from his back and he tumbled over somebody. There was another crash and Harry was thrown back on his back. There were people screaming.

"Just appeared," Someone was yelling in disbelief over and over again.

"Somebody, get an ambulance," Someone else yelled frantically.

"Harry, are you alive?" Fleur's face appeared over him her long hair hanging over him.

"Answer me," Fleur demanded but Harry was too shocked to answer.

"HARRY!" Fleur yelled when he didn't answer.

Harry felt stinging pain in his cheek Fleur must have slapped him.

"Ouch!" He croaked out.

"Oh Harry I am sorry are you all right?" Fleur asked desperately.

"Did we make it?" asked Harry

"Yes we did," Fleur replied.

"All of us?"

"Yes and what's left of the wagon too," Fleur said and tears started falling down on him from her eyes down on his face, "I thought we were going to die Harry, I was so sure of it."

"It's all right," Harry said and Fleur broke down on him sobbing hysterically.

Harry put his arms around her and cried. He cried so badly, all the tension flooded out through his eyes, his body racked with uncontrollable sobs and so did Fleur. He was vaguely aware of somebody climbing up next to them and started making sure

everyone was alive. He couldn't see who it was even if he had wanted to since Fleur was in the way and her long silver blond hair.

"Er... Miss?" A male voice asked gently, "Are you all right? Will you let me examine you, I am a healer."

Fleur didn't pay any attention she just continued sobbing her eyes out and so did Harry.

"Miss you will have to answer me. I have to make sure you are in no lethal danger," The male voice said softly.

"Miss!" The male voice said more forcefully when Fleur didn't respond.

"It's all right, John I will take care of her just get the other to St Mungo's and make sure they will be taken care for," Professor Dumbledore's voice said imperiously.

"There is someone else here as well, Professor," John said sounding like a first year.

"Thank you John that will be all," Dumbledore said firmly and Harry could hear John leaving them.

"As you wish Professor Dumbledore, do you care to identifying them before I leave?" John's voice could be heard though it was much further away now.

"Nymphadora Tonks, Selena Tonks, Hermione Granger and Ronald Weasley... and I will keep that cloak if you don't mind, John?" Dumbledore said gently.

"Of course not Professor... it was nice meeting you again," said John.

"Likewise albeit I wish it could have been under more pleasant circumstances," Dumbledore replied courteously.

"You aren't hurt are you?" Fleur sniffed.

"No, what about you, are you sure you shouldn't go to St Mungo's?" Harry asked.

"I will manage," Fleur whispered, "but I think you broke my hand."

"Sorry," Harry apologized at once, "We just faced Voldemort and about a hundred death eaters and I am the only one who actually hurts you."

"I forgive you Wingbeat you saved my life twice after all," Fleur said holding up her hand and her bracelet.

"Professor?" Harry asked when Dumbledore came into view above him.

"Please keep your voice down Harry, the ministry is better off not knowing the finer details of what happened today," Dumbledore said silently but loud and clear enough for both Harry and Fleur to hear him.

"Put your cloak on, Magical law enforcement will arrive any moment," Dumbledore said and spread the cloak over them so that they could put it on lying down. Harry and Fleur wrapped the cloak around them and stood up.

"Are you well enough to walk a few blocks away?" Dumbledore asked.

"Yes but Fleur's hand is broken," Harry whispered

"I am afraid I forbade Vertex of following you here, once we are a few blocks away I will call for him," Dumbledore said and jumped down from the train wagon and on to the street nimbly.

Harry and Fleur jumped down after him though not as nimbly as they both had to remain under the invisibility cloak. It was almost nothing left of the train wagon only their compartment. The compartment was balancing oddly at the only remaining train wheel. Harry knew the ministry would have loads of trouble making the muggles on the street forget about this but didn't care much.

"Follow me," Dumbledore said quietly and starting walking away from the remains of the Hogwarts express wagon.

Harry expected the muggles on the street to gape at an old man with white long beard and purple robes but they didn't they seemed hardly to notice him even though they must have because people stepped out of his way.

"What do you think is happening?" Fleur whispered in Harry's ear.

"No idea," Harry replied, "I don't see why we didn't have to go to St Mungo's for observations or at least to the hospital wing..."

"You are fine aren't you?" Fleur asked suspiciously.

"Sure," said Harry, feeling slightly sick again when he thought of the human he had killed.

"What is that supposed to mean?" asked Fleur.

"I killed someone Tonks did too, they didn't even see us," Harry whispered.

Fleur didn't reply for a long moment, "Thank you," she finally said.

"For what?" Harry asked slightly annoyed.

"For protecting me," said Fleur simply, "You didn't want me to be dead rather than the death eater would you?"

"No," Harry said as loud as he dared with muggles all around him.

"There you go then, you did what you had to do," Fleur explained, "It was a choice between them and us don't you ever feel guilty for it."

"I still murdered someone," said Harry tunelessly.

"That was a price you had to pay then, you had to kill somebody deal with it," Fleur said firmly.

"Right," Harry said and with huge effort, he managed to put it out of his mind for the moment, "I killed Nagini too."

"You did?" Fleur asked impressed, "You killed Voldemort's snake?"

"Yes that's why he blew off half the wagon," Harry said feeling a little better, "Tonks saved me, she made me run."

"I got to thank her," Fleur replied.

Dumbledore turned and walked into an alley away from view once there was no chance of anyone noticing them. Dumbledore turned and fixed them with his piercing gaze right through the invisibility cloak.

"You can remove the cloak now," Dumbledore said and as they did so, there were two bright red flashes and Vertex and Fawkes appeared sitting on each of Dumbledore's shoulders.

"Vertex!" Fleur exclaimed, "Are you all right? I was so worried Voldemort had trapped you with the apparition wards somehow."

"Phoenixes doesn't care about apparition wards," Harry said and held out his arm for Vertex to sit on.

"Hello Vertex," He said when his bird landed on his arm, "Hello to you too as well Fawkes."

"I hurt my hand," Fleur said and showed her hand carefully for Vertex, "Can you help me?"

Vertex bent his long neck and investigated Fleur's hand carefully before he started crying on it. Harry was a bit curious to see how Phoenix tears healed broken bones; he had only seen them heal scratches. As if the tears knew what was wrong they seemed to go right through Fleur's skin and into her hand. Fleur's hand turned red as if being held over a powerful lamp, the bones in her hand were visible as greyish shadows and it was easy to see which bone that was broken. The broken bone started shining white through her skin and Fleur gasped as it grew back together.

"Well done Vertex," Dumbledore praised.

"Yeah," Harry added, "That was amazing."



“Thank you sweetie,” Fleur said and kissed the bird who happily kissed back. Fawkes looked on slightly confused over the strange behaviour.

“Are you both feeling physically fine now?” Dumbledore asked gently.

“Yeah I suppose so,” Harry said and stretched his body just to make sure, it ached all over but it was bearable and he knew he had nothing worse than bruises and some minor cuts.

“We’re fine,” Fleur said lacing her fingers with his.

“Excellent, now is there anything I should know of immediately?”

“Other than Voldemort attacking us?” Harry asked.

“No headmaster I can’t think of anything,” Fleur said thoughtfully.

Dumbledore nodded, “Then I am afraid we have to continue to Privet Drive.”

“Dumbledore sir, but what about Selena, Tonks Hermione and Ron?” Harry asked quickly. What he most of all now wanted was to go straight to St Mungo’s and be there when they all woke up.

“They will be perfectly fine. You can write them a letter telling them you are in good condition as well,” Dumbledore replied reassuringly as he pulled out his wand.

“Not to be rude sir but my aunt and uncle...”

“And what about me headmaster?” Fleur interrupted.

“One thing at a time,” Dumbledore said patiently, “First we apparate to the Dursleys and then we sort out the technicalities.”

Harry and Fleur nodded reluctantly.

“Good,” Dumbledore said and apparated them all right to the front porch of number four privet drive. The last place on earth Harry wanted to be.

This was not his day Harry thought grumpily as Dumbledore rang the doorbell. He wondered if the muggles of Privet Drive wouldn't notice the three of them dressed in robes suddenly appearing outside number four but nobody seemed to do so.

Harry was brought out of his thoughts by the familiar sound of his uncle unlocking the door from the inside; he could tell it was his uncle by the forceful way. His aunt had the almost creepy ability to sneak doors open silently probably hoping to see things she shouldn't.

The door burst open as violently as possible without any of the neighbours noticing the rudeness. Vernon looked at them with a slightly confused expression and didn't even seem to notice Harry, of course Harry was not exactly easy to notice next to Dumbledore and Fleur.

"Yes?" His Uncle barked irritably.

"You must be Mr Vernon Dursley," The old wizard said, "I am Albus Dumbledore."

Uncle Vernon took a step back and surveyed Dumbledore again as if first now noticing he wore long purple robes.

"You are the one running that freak school!" Mr Dursley exclaimed accusingly.

Dumbledore chuckled, "I would prefer Headmaster of Hogwarts but it is obviously the same to you so I won't argue."

Uncle Vernon cast a glance over at Fleur where his eyes lingered for a moment and then strait at Harry.

"If you think I am taking him in my house... we decided not to pick him up, he is old enough to go live for himself. We have given him a roof and food for sixteen years and he has been nothing but trouble from the start!" Vernon ranted and Harry squeezed Fleur's hand gently hoping she wouldn't transform. Fortunately, Fleur seemed too exhausted to transform.

"I see," Dumbledore said evenly, "Could we perhaps come inside to discuss Harry's situation I dare say we are causing quite a scene."

Uncle Vernon paled at once and cast nervous glances over to the other occupants of Privet Drive. Harry wondered if Dumbledore knew how well the threat of causing a scene would work on Mr Dursley. When his uncle carefully had made sure none of the neighbours were watching them he stepped aside and gestured for them to enter.

"Vernon?" Aunt Petunia shrieked at the sight of Albus Dumbledore entering. Judging by the flowery apron she was wearing she was cooking dinner.

"Ah... Mrs. Petunia Dursley I presume," Dumbledore said politely ignoring her shriek for her husband.

"You are Albus Dumbledore," Petunia said taken aback.

"I see my reputation precedes me," Dumbledore said taking off his pointed hat courteously.

"Lily once showed me a photo," Petunia explained. She obviously feared Dumbledore enough to show him some respect even if her husband glared at her.

Harry noticed his cousin sitting cowardly at the far end of the table in the kitchen gaping stupidly at Fleur.

"Oh... this is Professor Delacour," Dumbledore said gesturing to Fleur who tightened her grip on Harry's hand and took a step closer to him.

"Hello," Fleur said in a very forced voice her French accent shining through clearer than usual.

"uh... Hi," Dudley said stupidly both his parents glared at him for speaking to a freak.

"Would it be too much to ask for a moment alone with Harry... perhaps we could go to your room?" Dumbledore asked.

"You are going nowhere but out! Leave me and my family alone we don't need freaks like you!" Uncle Vernon bellowed.

"Confundus," Dumbledore muttered under his breath and without any of the Dursleys noticing waved his wand at Vernon.

"Magic is not so bad," Dumbledore said softly.

"No magic is not so bad," Uncle Vernon agreed dreamily.

"We can have a chat with Harry in his room," Dumbledore went on.

"Yes, I suppose that is all right," Harry's uncle agreed, "Boy, show the way!"

"Thank you," Dumbledore said and gestured for Harry to lead the way.

A few moments later Harry and Fleur were sitting on the bed in the smallest bedroom and Dumbledore was sitting in a chair he had conjured.

"I got a note from Hermione," Dumbledore said seriously when Harry and Fleur didn't say anything, "It says you got disconnected from the Hogwarts express, that you were alone and that you saw Voldemort in Harry's foe glass."

"Yes," Harry confirmed, "And just as we sent Vertex off we heard the train's ward fall and then there was this click like when you dive on a broom. Hermione said it was apparition wards and Tonks said that she and Fleur would have to break them and then someone yelled the killing curse."

"It was Bellatrix Lestrange, I was on the lookout at the front of the wagon and suddenly Voldemort, she and Malfoy appeared in front of the wagon and before I could do anything she just cursed me," Fleur explained quickly, "But Harry's bracelet pulled me out of the way."

Dumbledore nodded, "Remus mentioned the bracelet please go on."

"I found Fleur in the last compartment of the train, she had burst right through the wall," said Harry.

"And I didn't even hurt myself." Fleur added questioningly.

"That would be the bracelet as well," Dumbledore said calmly, "Please continue."

"Then Tonks ordered me straight to Hermione to help her with the wards," Fleur told the older man.

"And I joined Tonks at the end of the wagon," Harry explained. "We had to hold them off somehow and make sure we gave Fleur and Hermione enough time to break the wards."

"I take it you faced Voldemort once again?" Dumbledore asked wearily.

"He threatened to go in if I didn't," Harry said defensively, "I had expected my scar to hurt but it didn't not as badly as usual anyway."

"When was the last time your scar hurt? Before this I mean." Dumbledore asked looking carefully at Harry's forehead.

"I don't know it was a very long time ago... at the end of the summer, no later before Halloween," Harry replied uncertainly.

"That would suggest that the reason your scar hurt is because Voldemort is a very dark wizard, so dark that it hurt those who are pure and don't have any resistance against dark arts," said Dumbledore thoughtfully, "It appears that the unfortunate incidents of Halloween may have given you some resistance against dark arts."

Fleur and Harry continued with each other's help to tell Dumbledore what had happened. Dumbledore did not seem surprised by the fact that they had lived through an explosion caused by about a hundred death eaters nor that they afterwards had managed to apparate the remains of the wagon away to the street outside the Leaky Cauldron.

"And then you found us," Fleur finished.

Dumbledore nodded thoughtfully, "If I understand this correctly then nobody knows you are alive?"

"No I don't think so, but Voldemort probably knows I am alive at least," Harry said gesturing to his scar.

"Voldemort is probably aware of it yes," Dumbledore agreed wearily.

With a flash, Fawkes and Vertex appeared and Dumbledore wrote a note, which he attached to Fawkes, "Please deliver this to the old heads of Hogwarts."

With another flash, Fawkes was gone.

"Now I believe you have some questions of your own?" Dumbledore asked surveying them gently with his bright blue eyes.

"Yes we do," Fleur said firmly as Vertex started exploring Harry's room enthusiastically.

"Why wouldn't you tell us before at St Mungo's," Harry burst out, "And what do you know about us... sir?"

"I learned my lesson not to meddle in private relationships long ago, what you have together no one but yourself can tell you," Dumbledore answered.

Dumbledore was probably right as usual, Harry figured, but he still felt irritated. He and Fleur sat quiet, awaiting explanations.

"I am not aware of everything but I do know certain facts," Dumbledore finally said, "I would have told you the little I know earlier but you seemed to figure it out by yourself so I decided not to."

Dumbledore paused for a moment to watch Vertex poke one of Harry's drawers open with his beak before he continued, "What I know about your special connection is not much I am afraid, but I do know some things."

Vertex gave an excited whistle, he had managed to open the drawer and found an old eagle Quill.

"I am proud to say, Harry that I knew your parents well enough for them to tell me about any kind of magical accidents," Dumbledore went on.

"They told you about it," Harry asked hopefully.

"No they didn't," Dumbledore replied shortly.

"But why did you say that then?" Fleur asked curiously.

"A little more then sixteen years ago, both of your mothers bought new wands from Ollivander..."

"My mum too?" Harry asked.

"Yes your mother as well, Harry," Dumbledore replied gently.

"But that is not very likely," Fleur said, "Wands doesn't just break like that and I can't have snapped both of them."

"No you are indeed correct wands don't break like that without a reason. As I said James and Lily would have informed me if it had been an accident," said Dumbledore surveying them seriously.

Harry and Fleur sat silent. Millions of thoughts whirled through Harry's mind and he wasn't sure what to believe. If Harry understood Dumbledore right then his parents had been aware of everything.

"So it was on purpose," Fleur finally asked.

"Yes, it appears so," Dumbledore replied smiling gently.

"They didn't curse us did they," Harry asked stupidly, he knew their mothers would never curse them but it was all he could think of.

"No on the contrary, I believe they did the very opposite," Dumbledore said while watching Vertex trying to open another drawer, "Both your and Neville's parents where of course informed of the prophesy, Harry."

Harry stared blankly down in his knee, he had not thought about the prophecy since that night in McGonagall's office much less told Fleur about it. He could feel her wondering gaze at him but didn't look up.

"I appear to have said too much, as usual," Dumbledore said apologetically.

"No it's okay," Fleur said gently, "I don't mind having my memory erased if that will help."

"I'm sorry for not telling you," Harry muttered, "I don't like to think about it you see but I don't mind if Dumbledore tell you."

"No," Fleur said at once, "I don't need to know unless you want to tell me... I mean you haven't well..." Fleur cast a glance over Dumbledore who seemed to be completely occupied with Vertex, "... you never even asked me once about veela stuff and I am okay with not knowing if you promise to tell me when you are ready."

Harry looked up at Fleur she was smiling gently. Harry wanted to tell her everything that moment but held himself back, it was much too private to him and he could never be just her friend if she knew about the prophecy.

"I promise," He said instead.

Dumbledore was entertaining Vertex by transfiguring the old quill to different small animals. Unlike every animal Harry had ever seen anyone transfigure, Dumbledore's animals were pure fantasy. Strange toad like creatures with wings and giraffe necks slowly appeared as if Dumbledore modelled them in his mind.

"Professor, you were saying my parents knew about..." Harry asked and the strange animals slowly transformed back into the old quill.

"Yes," Dumbledore said wearily and turned his attention back to them, "I informed them as soon as it was clear you and Neville were the possible candidates."

Fleur sat quiet and didn't say anything though Harry could feel her radiating curiosity.



"I should have expected your parents to try something like this of course, especially as they seemed to accept the prophecy without questions. But then again James managed to keep his animagus form a secret from me during all those years..." said Dumbledore thoughtfully.

"So our parents did this to us?" Fleur asked, "I mean why us, and for what good?"

"Your parents somehow managed to unlock your magic for each other's use, my guess would be that they performed a ritual of some kind that resulted in the destruction of their wands. The reason they did this would be to protect the two of you, and I dare say it has worked excellently so far," said Dumbledore gently.

Harry felt completely and utterly lost. He had slowly accepted Hermione's theory and found it acceptable but now he would have to readjust again.

"I took myself the liberty to go through your medical journals and found that you fainted the night of Halloween when Harry was hit with the curse," Dumbledore was telling Fleur when Harry snapped out of his thoughts. "At first I thought it was a coincident but then I saw that the healer wrote that you didn't have any apparent physical damages."

"But I remember it, Albus, I got so scared..." Fleur said but trailed off as she realised what Dumbledore was hinting.

"If you indeed already shared your connection then, which I believe you did, I find it very unlikely that you would not notice anything at all when Harry was hit with the curse," Dumbledore said almost apologetically.

"So it was because of that I fainted," Fleur stated, "Just like when Harry saved Selena."

"Yes I believe so, at both occasions Harry strained his magical strength to the limit and probably most of yours as well," Dumbledore explained, "Had you not had your connection these events might not have worked out as well as they did."

Harry and Fleur sat silent thinking everything over.

"But why Fleur, I mean we don't even look alike," Harry finally asked.

Dumbledore chuckled, "No you definitely don't on the contrary, you look very little alike in fact I would go so far as to say that you couldn't be less unlike each other. Have you noticed for a chance that even your birthdays are exactly half a year from each other?"

"No," Harry replied, "But I don't understand, sir, is this coincidence?"

"Judging by your appearance and date of birth very adapt to perform magic together, you compliment each other. That is probably the main reason your parents choose the two of you."

Harry didn't know what to say so he just sat silent, Fleur did the same. Dumbledore let them take their time and started playing with Vertex again.

"Has Remus told you everything we talked about?" Fleur asked after a moment narrowing her eyes. Harry still had millions of questions to ask but he was thankful that Fleur changed the subject. It was just all too much to take in at once especially as they just had survived an encounter with Voldemort.

Dumbledore smiled, "I don't know about everything but yes, he has told me quite a lot. He worries for you both."

"Did you set them up by the way, in that carriage," Fleur asked smiling widely.

Dumbledore chuckled again, "Yes I may be guilty of that, but it seems to have turned out rather well don't you think?"

Harry and Fleur nodded.

"Now over to the technicalities, Harry you are becoming seventeen this summer and thus you don't have to come back here after that," Dumbledore said. "You do however have to spend this summer here."

"I am not leaving Harry with them all summer!" Fleur exclaimed incredulously.

"Very well I will go and inform the Dursleys that both of you are staying," Dumbledore said resolutely and stood up.

"How are you going to do that, sir?" Harry asked nervously.

"I believe your uncle's car is not of this year's model," said Dumbledore his eyes twinkling.

"You are going to buy them a new car?"

"I think a bit of transfiguration will do the trick," Dumbledore said lightly, "Good day to you both."

Harry and Fleur found themselves speechless. They just smiled at each other. This would definitely be the best summer ever at number four Privet Drive and hopefully the last.

**To Be Continued...**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Now I'm really nervous! You know how this part ends... what do you think? Does my reasoning make any sense at all? I know certain things are a bit sudden but Rowling often make things sudden as well.

If you remember... Mr. Ollivander tells Harry in PS that he remembers when his mother bought her first wand. I don't really think JKR meant anything by that but it fits this story.

I hope you don't hate me too much for not setting Fleur and Harry up for real. I know I said they would get together in the end... I just didn't mean the end of this story. I have to have something to write about in the sequel after all.

I'll upload an A/N tomorrow and answer the reviews from this chapter.

Thanks for reading Harry Potter and Broken Wands. I hope you enjoyed reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it... if that is possible : )

**Thank you Seaver for beta reading and making wonderful plot suggestions.**

I have so far received **230** reviews from **76** different readers!

|                  |    |
|------------------|----|
| keebler-elmo     | 24 |
| devotion408      | 16 |
| tingold          | 14 |
| coolone007       | 11 |
| blunt-but-honest | 10 |
| acaciajules      | 8  |
| alex110          | 7  |
| trigun           | 6  |
| themunchkinator  | 6  |
| iceygaze         | 5  |
| jelei            | 5  |
| ankalagon        | 4  |
| blazinangelwings | 4  |
| baudburner       | 4  |
| everpresent      | 4  |
| jonay            | 4  |
| jbfritz          | 4  |
| sorrow1          | 4  |
| wytil            | 4  |
| bakamoo          | 3  |
| brolylss         | 3  |
| fledge           | 3  |
| kirkalicious     | 3  |
| rocky235         | 3  |
| slytherindamian  | 3  |
| szelij           | 3  |
| tass             | 3  |
| aensland         | 2  |
| bigfan101        | 2  |
| bferbear         | 2  |
| cory3            | 2  |

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| h-ruff          | 2 |
| joyce2          | 2 |
| linky2          | 2 |
| nasserpotter    | 2 |
| newbie-sama     | 2 |
| rog1039         | 2 |
| seaver          | 2 |
| slimpun         | 2 |
| tropicofscorpio | 2 |
| alex20          | 1 |
| akaharry        | 1 |
| anne            | 1 |
| barney          | 1 |
| chris-warren876 | 1 |
| critic          | 1 |
| darksage        | 1 |
| ginnyisshallow  | 1 |
| hoboh           | 1 |
| himura          | 1 |
| lordmasteromega | 1 |
| logan           | 1 |
| luke-6622427    | 1 |
| liberate        | 1 |
| me              | 1 |
| muggle          | 1 |
| maidenmasherv   | 1 |
| maaz            | 1 |
| nevets          | 1 |
| niki            | 1 |
| nasserhimura    | 1 |
| nasser          | 1 |
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| otakufreak      | 1 |
| paladin3030     | 1 |
| pegeuk          | 1 |
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| penterghast     | 1 |
| siriusforever14 | 1 |
| simezz          | 1 |
| styxx           | 1 |

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| sirdarlon         | 1 |
| shawnpickett      | 1 |
| saphiremorgona    | 1 |
| trash1            | 1 |
| uncletrapspringer | 1 |

**Thanks all!** Sorry for losing capitals and removing spaces from your names, the program I used to count and sort you all couldn't handle that.

Thanks keebler-elmo for being my **hundred** and most frequent reviewer!

Also thanks Acacia Jules for being my **two hundred** reviewer!

I am sorry for leaving a few things hanging but I need something to write about in the sequel. Broken Wands was pretty quickly written so I think the sequel will be too.

**All right now for the review answers...**

JoNaY: Well the big question... ⌘ spoiler alert ⌘ they'll be together for good at the end of the sequel.

Jbfritz: Thanks, I'll post the first chapter of the sequel ASAP.

Acacia Jules: It wouldn't be too unlike JKR to do that... Yep 200th reviewer! lol, I celebrated the end of this story with chocolate as well! Unlike all you poor, none Swedes, I only have to wait until Easter (first Thursday of April more precise) for next trick or treat celebration. We do that twice a year! However only witch costumes are allowed as it's the day all witches travel on broom to blåkulla (place where witches meet and do nasty stuff). Thanks you for reading it.

coolone007: A/N Authors Note (or alphanumeric, I think)... Yeah Dumbledore is his cryptic old self. Oh no they are not betrothed but it's true their parents certainly believed they would get along at least as friends. Yep I'll send you an email... I know I already wrote you all this in that email but for the cause of consistency in me review replies, I repeat myself.

Nasser Himura: Well we'll see how that goes... there will certainly be some magic at Number four Privet Drive.

Shawn Pickett: Thanks. You'll have to wait for a while for the sequel.

Wytil: Yep Harry's wand is still broken... lol... don't worry though he'll mend it in the sequel.

Kirkalicious: Thanks! Harry and Fleur will end up together, don't worry.

Rocky235: Thanks, that's a really nice review! I am not very proud of my English but I am very proud of the plot. Thanks.

keebler-elmo: They will start experimenting with their powers in the sequel... Harry is by birth stronger than Fleur magically. Yes, they draw magic from each other as soon as they touch each other... remember when 'Dueling for Masters' broke Fleur's office door down... Fleur's parents had a reason. If you remember I let Nancy point out during the Xmas that Fleur had to sort up her parents belongings... they might find some clues.

Fledge: Thanks I like the happy waking up part as well. Harry is in denial of the prophesy he hasn't even been thinking of it himself. I will have fun with the male Dursleys... Thanks I figure it will probably be a while before I can write anything like the "Psychic Serpent" though... thanks I feel much more confident in my English now as well. Thanks, I'll do my best to make the sequel as long and interesting as possible.

blunt-but-honest: Thanks... oh I figured Dumbledore and Petunia only knew each other by letters. I don't think they actually have seen each other... Thanks again.

NIKKI: I know I already said this in my mail but.... Thanks, thanks, thanks again, of course you may print it!

h-ruff: Thanks! You are welcome!

Saphire Morgona: Thanks! No sequel is up yet I'm afraid. I can mail you the link when I start posting the sequel however.

Liberate: Thanks... you think Rowling would be proud... thanks!

**Let me know if you want a mail when I start posting the sequel.**  
Just like this story, I plan to finish the sequel first before I post the story. So it'll take a while before I start posting... sorry all. If it's to any comfort I think I'll be able to write a few thousand words every day.

Vertex